631 segments of an organization. It seems that in pre-
[721] Turkish times there was a tendency for contiguous
631 settlements to combine for war against other settle-
619 ments or under the leadership of an outstanding
personality, but such combinations were not
permanent, or even consistent enough for us to
• [177 speak of them as political groups. The Turkish
648] Administration tried to give greater consistency to
them so that they could be used as administrative
units, and the Anglo-Egyptian Government has
done the same and calls them divisions and appoints
a chief for each. Previously they appear to have
been little more than districts or localities, and the
only chiefs between the king and the chiefs of
settlements were those of Ger, northern Shilluk-
land, and Luak, southern Shillukland, whose
functions had, as we shall see, a ritual rather than
an administrative character, and those of Muomo
and Tonga, the settlements which are the northern
and southern marches of Shillukland, whose
functions were also partly ritual. In Shilluk
speech Muomo and Tonga correspond exactly,
Professor Westermann tells us, to the expression of
631 the ancient Hebrews: from Dan unto Beersheba.[1]

[1] Diedrich Westermann, *The Shilluk People. Their Language and Folklore* (1912), p. xx.

643 kann, und Herr sogar des Eigentums seiner Unter-
114 tanen'.[1] These statements would seem to require
642 some modification. As Mr Pumphrey has pointed
• [177] out, it is unlikely that the so-called 'provinces' were in fact more than districts or that they were in any sense administrative departments before they were made into something of the kind by foreign governments.[2] Moreover, though doubtless the king exercised considerable influence in the country and may have confirmed settlement chiefs in office, he did not nominate them. They were heads of settlements in virtue of their position as heads of lineages dominant in those settlements and although they had certain duties to the king it is, I think, wrong to describe them as being in any sense administrative officials. To use such terms as 'state', 'government', and 'administration' in speaking of the Shilluk political system would appear to me, in the light of what is now known of it, to be a mistake.

643 It is true that the more recent authorities imply
114 rather than explicitly state what in their opinion
692 is the position of the king. Mr Howell and Mr Thomson speak of 'the theoretical omnipotence' of the king and of a 'theoretically omnipotent

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 150–1.
[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 18–19.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

773 825 son of Deng) came in the time of Duwat . . . he came into the Shilluk country to the people of the king (that is to Fashoda). And when we became many some went to Fenikang Odurojo, but some remained at Fenidwai. Thus we separated from each other. . . . That is the beginning of (the village of) Adefalo—the ostrich and crow are of our family. They are not eaten by us on account of the *dwalo* sickness." [1]

Westermann states that the common ancestor to whom members of a clan trace descent is in most cases a man, but that "some of the clans claim descendency from an animal".[2] Hofmayr states that the number of totems among the Shilluk is small, and gives the following examples: ostrich, hippopotamus, Varanus lizard, giraffe, *gu* (a fish), a gourd, *ayiado* (a bean), *cwa* (tamarind), and *tuko* (hearth-stone). This seems to imply a wide distribution of particular clans. He also cites *curro* (a fish), the crocodile, the crested crane, and the knee-joint as totems of Tonga in the extreme south.[3]

262 773 825 As to the origin of these totems, if totems they be, we were informed that the prohibition to eat the fish *curro* was directly due to Nyakang, who told his people to bring him all the fish they caught in the river. Although they brought him many fish, they kept back one, and Nyakang, who knew this, as in dreams men are aware of things happening at a distance, told his people, i.e. all the Shilluk, that this fish must always be unlawful food to them. Concerning the crocodile, we were informed that all might eat it except those possessed by Nyakang or his mother, who if they ate it would die, and for this reason many *ajuago* might not eat it. Further questions on totemic lines elicited the statement: "If they [a group] are called thus [an animal or clan name] because it is a name let them eat him; if he was an ancestor [they] would not eat him."

114 177 825 Considering the data just cited we are struck by the fact that Westermann's example is almost in the typical Dinka form of totemism (twin birth of totem animal and human progenitor of clan), while the example given by Hofmayr is from Tonga at the extreme south of the Shilluk country, where, as we discovered, mixed marriages resulting in a mingling of Dinka and Shilluk cults were by no means uncommon. We are then inclined to consider that Shilluk totemism—as far as it exists—is due to Dinka influence.[4] In any

[1] Op. cit., 178–9. [2] Op. cit., 127. [3] Op. cit., 236.

[4] Hofmayr quotes a Shilluk text in which belief in a fish, a woman, and a gourd as ancestors is ascribed to the Dinka (op. cit., p. 235), i.e. in principle it agrees with that given by Westermann as applying to the Shilluk. Since writing the above we have heard from Mr. Heasty of a *kwa* Jang with the ostrich as totem, ostrich, crow, and man having emerged from a gourd as described on p. 41. Jang is the common Nilotic word for Dinka. Mr. Heasty, who does not regard the Shilluk as truly totemic, adds, "certainly many of the *kwa* have no totem."

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

case, while exogamy is generally observed, the association of particular groups of men and animals seems to make no great emotional appeal to the Shilluk—to be but little loaded with affect—compared with the similar feelings among the Dinka. We may also refer to the suggestion put forward by Hofmayr,[1] that the incoming Shilluk had a definite totemic system, which became less important as the cult of Nyakang developed and the newcomers mixed with the earlier inhabitants of what is now the Shilluk country. Evidence for or against this hypothesis may be forthcoming when we know more of the beliefs of the Luo and Anuak. We therefore leave the subject with the observation that the existence of a partial totemism of the Dinka pattern among the Shilluk would be explained if the earlier inhabitants absorbed by Nyakang and his horde—it will be remembered that these included animals which he turned into men—were Dinka, or folk with kindred beliefs.

Dr. Tucker has given us some interesting information which, though it does not actually concern totemism, might at first sight be confused with it and is worthy of further investigation. The inhabitants of a village, Pathuor, mark a scorpion several inches in length in raised cicatricial tissue on the shoulder—left for men and right for women so that it is not hidden by the shoulder cloth. The reason they give is that they "desire to cultivate the strength of the scorpion"; yet they kill without scruple scorpions that they find in their huts. Other designs scarred on the shoulder, described by Dr. Tucker, include the horse, tortoise, aeroplane, and the sun. He reports a most curious instance of cicatrization as a result of a village quarrel. One village, Paalo, decided that it would no longer eat the fish *okok*, because the village Pajur, with which it was at enmity, is situated at the edge of a creek where many *okok* are caught. The Paalo proceeded to represent an *okok* in raised cicatrices on the shoulder; Pajur retaliated by avoiding lemons—because Paalo, living near the mission, grows lemons—and they scarred lemons on their shoulders. This was about a year ago; goodwill now reigns between villages, and consequently the *okok* and the lemon are no longer avoided.

Turning now to the king and royal family, we would emphasize that the Shilluk king is the supreme spiritual and temporal ruler, and that to separate his functions—as for the sake of clarity we are about to do—is an artificial device. Nevertheless, we shall now

[1] Op. cit., 233.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

only after this is he "the chosen of God" (*aronyi Juok*) and fit incumbent of his new office. The first ceremonial duty of the high-chief is to visit the king, who presents him with an ox, more costly presents being made to the high-chiefs of Mwom and Tonga. Every high-chief has his assistant (*tyel kwome*), who exercises authority as occasion requires. The village chiefs are chosen by their communities, and we believe all these offices to be in the main hereditary, though further investigation is here necessary, as it is with regard to the ministerial council, mentioned by Hofmayr, whose members are selected by the king.

Fashoda—not to be confused with Kodok, the Fashoda of international fame—is the royal capital, *fa reth* ("the place of the king"), from which the king has ruled for many decades. Yet it was not always so: Father Banholzer told us that formerly each Shilluk king reigned from and was buried in his native village. Fenikang is the traditional capital of Nyakang and probably of his immediate successors. Perhaps, too, some of the early kings ruled the country from Tatuga (Doleib Hill). Tugo is said to have been the first king to live at Fashoda; whether this is correct or not, Fashoda certainly was not the *fa reth* of all the kings who succeeded him, though Nyadwai and Yur Adodit ruled the country from villages in its neighbourhood. Nyadwai lived and died at Kodok, where in 1909 we were shown the remains of the tree which according to tradition sprang from his grave; actually the association seems to have been that it stood near his dwelling and that he would often sit under it. Malakal and Walajok are also said to have been capitals in their time.

The king and his many wives live at Fashoda (Pl. V, Fig. 1). The king's dwelling when we saw it in 1910 consisted of four huts, no better built than those of his people and lacking the ostrich-egg and spear of the royal shrines. They stood well above the rest of the settlement on an artificial mound, called Aturwic (shown on Pl. VI), which may have been some ten feet high, and was said to have been built by the tenth king, Tugo.

The king observes the same marriage prohibitions as his people, even remote relatives on both sides of the family being forbidden; thus the king and all male descendants of the king must marry commoners, while daughters of the king should not marry at all, though foreign influence is, we believe, slowly modifying the old practice. Mr. Heasty writes that unless the king takes a

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Death and Funeral Ceremonies

The Shilluk idea of the spiritual make-up of man is neither simple nor easy to understand. Every living man has both *wei* and *tipo*, the former signifying "breath", "life", the latter "shadow", "image", as in water or mirror. We have already referred to the *cen* of one dying in anger and malevolence (p. 97), and there is a word *aneko*, meaning ghost, i.e. the spirit of one dead. So far we are reasonably certain of our facts, but there may be an element called *winyo* (lit. bird) of whose functions we can predicate nothing.

No death occurred in the villages we visited whilst we were among the Shilluk.

According to Hofmayr, death may be hastened when there is much suffering or if the agony is long drawn out. He states that a prolonged period of immobility of the body is taken for death; the women immediately begin to wail, the dying man is declared dead, his face is covered with a cloth, and the grave is dug.[1] Burial is at full length, a few paces from the door of the house in which the deceased lived. The grave is dug by old men, mostly relatives. A skin is placed in the grave and the body laid upon it wrapped in a white cloth (this is a recent introduction) and covered with another skin. The position of the hands is uncertain; we were told that they were laid between the knees, and also that they were placed in front of the face. Nothing is buried with the corpse, but later a hole is made near and objects placed in it.

Westermann's text, from which the following account is taken, is of special interest as it contains minute details of Shilluk behaviour; it is, however, too long for inclusion and we give only the salient features. It should be noted that his description applies to rich and important men; with a single exception the graves that we saw had no cattle horns on them, and we believe that for a poor man cattle are not always killed. The use of a bier is not invariable:—

When a man dies two fowls are killed, one being placed at the head of the deceased. An ox and a goat are also sacrificed. Beads are tied round the ankles of the men who prepare the grave:—

> "The man is buried thus: Some men dig the hole, and some men skin the cow [ox in the early part of the account] . . . the hide is cut into strips, and a bier is [made] . . ., his wife is called, she is to hold the feet of the dead man, and the man is laid on the bier. His wife (or: the women belonging

[1] Op. cit., 299.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

221 233 578 weighty ceremonies, in order to keep the crocodiles away; this forms an important part of the duties of the witch-doctor; vide page 172. All the youths and boys over ten years accompany the herds, leaving their homes for several weeks or even months, and enjoying the free life in temporary huts. When after the first rains the new grass springs up, they return home. The struggle for the best pasture grounds very often becomes the cause of bitter quarrels, and has in the past not unfrequently led to tribal wars.

231 GOATS The Shilluk goats have rather high legs, they almost unvariably look thin and not well fed; their colour is mostly grey, but black ones too are not unSHEEP frequent. The sheep have no wool, but hair. They have a kind of mane on shoulder, neck and breast, the rest of the body being covered with short hair.
FOWLS Most sheep are white, brown-white, or black-white. — A race of small fowls is kept, but the natives do not make much of them; many chickens are stolen
DOGS by snakes and other small animals. — Dogs are very numerous, they are a kind of greyhound, of red or yellow colour, and have a black, long snout. They are exceedingly quick in running and most clever in jumping. They overtake gazelles with easiness, and are much used in hunting.

224 HUNTING Hunting is practised by all men occasionally, but is, as a rule, not very successful. They use spears, clubs, and traps in killing or catching animals. [411] Sometimes, chiefly in procuring animals whose skins form part of the revenue of the king, all the people of a village assemble for a hunting match, vide page 125; a large circle is formed, and the animals inside it, when wishing to escape, are killed. When an animal is wounded, but runs away, they will persecute it for [643] days, till it breaks down. The skin of a killed leopard belongs to the king, and could, at least formerly, be worn by privates only by special permission of the king. A lion's skin is considered as evil, and is not worn.

225 Hippopotamus hunting is done by combined parties in canoes, harpooning the animal and dispatching him with spears, when he comes to the surface to breathe.

226 FISHING Their way of fishing is that with the round barbed spear, and with traps, which are made of corn stalks and reed. Fish-spearing is done in muddy water, where they cannot see anything below the surface, and therefore cannot aim. But nevertheless by this rude mode they sometimes have good results, the fish in the White Nile and Sobat being numerous and large. Sometimes they carry on fishing during the night time by holding burning grass-torches over the water, and thus enticing the fish, which are then speared. In recent time nets [177] and fishhooks are bought from the white people, and are employed in fishing.

463 HANDICRAFTS The Shilluks practise a great number of crafts, which are carried on in families for generations, the father and mother imparting their skill to their children.

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A list of craftsmen and their trade vide page 105. A few words may be added here on some particular crafts. They have skilful blacksmiths; these make spears, BLACKSMITHS 326
hoes, axes, harpoons, picks, arm-rings of brass and of iron, bells, chains. Their handicraft, which is carried on chiefly during the dry season, is a travelling one; they take their tools and go about from one place to another. While among the Dinkas the blacksmiths are considered a low, despised class of people, who live separate from the villages in the bush, with the Shilluks they are respected persons, and accordingly their pay is good. The employer has to support the blacksmith working for him, and pays him a sheep beside. Iron is not found in the Shilluk country. Previous to the opening up of the country to the traders the iron secured by the Shilluks came from the Dinkas and Nuers, who seemed to buy it from the natives of the Upper Nile regions (Jurs, Bongos), where iron is smelted; some may also have come from Darfur through Kordofan. In recent years, however, nearly all of it is procured from the north, and is of European origin. A remarkable proof of the growing willingness on the side of the natives to work for wages is the fact that during the last two years the American missionaries have introduced and sold to the natives some thirteen tons of raw iron, together with a great number of good iron tools, as axes, etc. Not only the raw material, but even the finished articles of native manufacture are gradually being replaced by European imports. Their good spears are still made by their own blacksmiths, but many cheap spears are bought from the traders; so are their crude axes, mattocks and hoes. Iron bracelets and other ornaments are made by their blacksmiths from iron rods. If the rod is too large, it is heated and beaten out. Whatever the Shilluk blacksmith makes, is superior to the imported article that he gets from the Arab or Greek trader. It may be mentioned that the word *ligo*, which means originally and properly "blacksmith", has also the wider sense of "craftsman", and has become a designation for all other crafts they practise.

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An important craft is that of the thatch-maker. The roofs of the Shilluk OTHER CRAFTS 331
houses are of a peculiarly neat description. While the Dinkas generally leave the roof with the appearance of being unfinished, the grass not being smoothed down and cut at the ends, the Shilluk thatcher makes his thatch with a neatness which really excites admiration. The framework of the roof is always made on the ground and placed on the circular wall like a great conical cap.

Plaiting is practised by both sexes. Men make the large, coarse mats for enclosing yards, and also the large grain baskets. Women plait small fancy mats for covering food, and also very nice small coloured baskets, sieves, etc.

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Most of the men make their own ostrich shell girdles. The shells are first broken into irregular pieces, which are pierced in the center with an awl-

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3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

323 mostly consisting of ring-shaped lines with dots in them. The pipe-stem is a
276 long, thick, hollow reed of about 1½—2 cm in diameter. The juncture be-
531 tween the stick and the head is tightly closed with a leather cover. On the upper end of the stick a small, oblong gourd with a pointed head is fastened; here again the juncture is made tight by a leather cover wrapped about it. Along the stick four or five strings are fastened, by which the pipe is carried; a long, pointed stick for cleaning the pipe is tied to the stem with a string. They are
276 exceedingly fond of smoking, both men and women. The smoking materials is a little tobacco and much charcoal. The pipe being rather heavy, they usually sit
[516] down, bowing their head deep over the pipe while smoking. When sitting in a circle they take only one or two draughts, and after that hand the pipe over to their neighbour. — Tobacco is not only smoked, but also chewed passionately; this habit is more common among women and girls than among men. SMOKING AND CHEWING OF TOBACCO

756 In cases of sickness the doctor is called. His chief means of curing consists
758 in charms, but they also know some reasonable medicines, among which cutting stands in the first place; but although they inflict much pain, they often heal a sickness. — Sick people are nursed by their relatives with care; temporary residences are fixed for them by screening off a place in the yard.

43 Building houses, making fences, dressing skins, working neck supports, carving and polishing clubs and spear sticks, making ambach boats and other common work is understood by every Shilluk. The neck supports are "invented
352 by Nyikang." They are carved of wood, and are made to resemble the forms
[532] of animals, viz. of hippopotamus, giraffe, tiang, camel, ostrich and another bird, which seems to be an ibis. The Shilluks have no chairs or stools; old men sometimes sit on a piece of ambach wood, young people squat or lie on the ground. NECK SUPPORTS

463 The craftsmen do not practise their trade with the exclusion of all other kind of work; each one of them cultivates his farm and tends his cattle, and only during the time there is no farm-work, he works at his craft.

438 There are villages which are renowned in practising certain crafts; some in fishing or hunting, some in cattle-breeding or cultivating durra, some in making pots or baskets, etc. As these goods are exchanged between the villages, a little
[443] trade is going on; but in this trade among the natives no money is used, and it is practised only occasionally; they have no markets. The very little development of trade is illustrated by the expression used for it: ɛ̀gwɔ̀, which means "to sell" as well as "to buy"; all trade being done by barter, selling and buying are identical actions; the native cannot "buy" anything without at the same time
439 "selling" another thing; he exchanges one thing for another. In trading with
177 the Arab or Greek merchant they have, however, learnt the use of money;

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

here articles of purchase and sale are calculated in silver currency.

The daily work of the women is cooking, carrying water, cleaning the house and yard, etc. During the time of farmwork they help the men in cultivating the fields.

FOOD

The staple food is dura. It is cooked, baked into a bread *(kuge)*, roasted, brewed and, when green, eaten raw. For different kinds of food vide page 102. Their diet is rather monotonous, dura being its constant chief component. The dura is pounded and ground. The mortar is either a log of wood hollowed out, or a flat excavation in the ground, lined out with clay. The mill-stones — a large and a small one, with the latter the grinding is done — are secured from districts west of the Shilluk country. — Fire is made by twirling a hard stick on a soft piece of wood.

Besides dura they eat sesame, duchn, maize, beans, some onions, various grass seeds, the seeds of the lotus plant and of some kinds of nymphaeae. The fruit of several trees, as delaib, nabag, etc. also serve as food; they even rob ant hills to procure the winter store of hoarded seeds. White ants, when in the winged state, are a delicacy to them. — Milk is used in the household in many ways: it is drunk fresh, sour, or boiled, or dura meals are prepared with it. They also make butter, by shaking or rolling the milk in a gourd. — As domestic animals are almost never slain, meat forms no part of the daily food, but is rather an exceptional delicacy, which is, however, sought for with eagerness; of game they hardly leave any piece uneaten, skin and bowels not excepted; they do not even despise dead animals. The blood of killed animals is kept and cooked, but they do not tap the blood from living cattle, as is the custom with the Bari and Masai. — Generally they prefer the meat of castrated animals.

Two chief meals are taken daily; one from nine to ten in the morning, and the second at sunset.

BREWING OF BEER

A large quantity of the dura the people reap is used in cooking merisa or beer. The grain is put into jars and water poured on it. Thus it is left till the grain begins to sprout. Then it is spread in the sun to dry, and then pounded or ground; this wet meal is mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put a second time into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on it; the jars are covered with small mats and allowed to remain a day or two, until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week. Though this drink is slightly intoxicating, it does not seem to do great harm; it is very nourishing, and the natives regard it rather as a food than a beverage.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

retreat. Around our house they went in a regular stampede, and forming in a line again in front of the house for another charge.
This they repeated a number of times. Then a crowd of women, who had followed their husbands and sweethearts to battle, acted the part of foe, only to be overcome by the brave warriors and driven back. This part was very amusing. One old body with great bravery marched out and charged, using her pipe as her weapon. The men were a bit rough in driving her back, and she was evidently afraid her dear pipe would come to grief, so she took it inside our house and when next we saw her she was in the thick of a fray with a long weed as her weapon of offence and defence".]

The dry season is also the time for travelling. Relatives pay mutual visits, and marriageable young men go to the Nuers and Dinkas with spears, wire, stuffs, and durra, which they exchange for sheep and calves.

IV. RELIGION.

In the religion of the Shilluks three components are clearly distinguishable: 1. Jwok (*jwòk*) or God; 2. Nyikang (*Nyìkáŋ*), the progenitor and national hero of the Shilluks; 3. ajwogo (*àjwɔ̀gɔ́*), the witch doctor or sorcerer. These three do not exist separate from each other, but have many relations amongst one another. There are still other forms of religious service, but they are not so prominent as the three mentioned.

"Jwok (*jwòk*) is a supreme being, residing above". Whether he is regarded as creator is not sure. According to the sayings of some natives he surely is, but it seems probable that this belief, if there is such a one, is young, and must be traced back to Mohammedan or Christian influences. — On certain occasions an ox is killed as a sacrifice to Jwok, though this is done more frequently to Nyikang; prayers are also offered to Jwok, but according to my information, they have only one prayer to Jwok (for which vide page 171), while to Nyikang there are many. "Praying" to Jwok is expressed by a different word from that which serves for designating a prayer to Nyikang; the first is *lieng* "to pray"; its original meaning is probably: to conjure. In praying to Nyikang *kwaaŋ* "to ask for, to beg" is used. While the prayers to Nyikang are sung, and accompanied by dances, that one to Jwok is only spoken, not sung, and not accompanied by dancing. Jwok has no visible symbols or temples, nor are the prayers to him offered by a priest or sorcerer, but by the chief or village-elder.

In the heart and mind of the Shilluk Jwok does not possess a deep-rooted rank. In some way they do attribute good and evil to him, and chiefly the

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

a man by witchcraft, to prevent rain, and to cause the cattle to be barren. — There exist two kinds of sorcerers, the one whose functions are just mentioned, who plays an important and mostly beneficient *rôle* in public life and the official religion of the community, and another one whose doings are secret and who works for mischief. If this latter is convicted of his evil doings, he may be severely fined, or even sentenced to death. — Besides these the word *jal yuŋ* "man of medicine" is sometimes used; whether this is a synonym to *ajwŋŋ*, or whether it designates still a third class of "witch"-, or ordinary "doctor", I do not know.

When possessed by a spirit (or by Jwok?) the sorcerers become ecstatic; the same seems to be the case with a newly elected king; here it seems to be the spirit of Nyikang, which falls on his follower, vide page 149. ECSTASY

The texts contain many mythological tales and allusions, which may in former times have formed part of the strictly religious belief of the people, but exist now merely as historical traditions, without having any active meaning to the present generation; this domain of their mental life is, however, not sufficiently known as yet to allow a decisive judgment. A reminiscence of sun-service is evident from 55, page 166. The Nile and Sobat are populated by water-people, who in figure are partly like men, partly like crocodiles or fish. They had, in the past, many intercourses with men. — According to some older writers the spirits of the Nile are worshipped. They have their own cattle-herds, which live with them in and on the banks of the Nile. They often dive up from the water, chiefly in misty weather. When a cow is fished out of the river, it is placed under the protection of the Nile-spirits and the sun-god [1]. MYTHOLOGY

The Shilluks have two expressions which may be translated by "soul" or "spirit" of a living person: *uri* and *tipŋ*; *uri* means "breath", and is the life-giving factor in man; the meaning of *tipŋ* is "shadow" of a man, or "image", as seen when looking into clear, still water. — The spirit of a dead person is called *anaŋ*; the word is derived from *aŋŋ* to kill; *anaŋ* probably means "one who kills", or "who is killed". The *anaŋ* is feared. SOUL, SPIRIT

On the abode of deceased persons the Shilluks have but vague ideas; in one of the texts the dead are called "the people of the village of God", *ji pū juŋ*. Whether they have a general belief in a life after death, is not known. ABODE OF THE DECEASED

Islam does up to now not find much sympathy with the Shilluks. They prefer their own religion to that of foreigners. Only a few people who for a longer time lived in close touch with Mohammedans, chiefly those who have served as soldiers, adopt the religion of Mohammed, or at least wear Mohammedan amulets beside their own charms. It is admirable that these people, Shilluks, Dinkas Anywaks, and Nuers, though having lived for centuries side ISLAM

[1] This doubtlessly relates to the cows of Nyikang, vide the preceding.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

by side with Arabs and other Mohammedan people, should have preserved their own heathen form of worship, and should, with a few exceptions, look down rather with contempt on the religion of the foreigners. Partly this is explained by their conservativeness and self-confidence, and partly by the fact that their intercourse with Mohammedans was almost exclusively hostile. Whether now that the Pax Britannica makes slave-dealing and raiding impossible and new ideas slowly penetrate the country, Islam will make greater progress, the future will show. A gradual peaceful conquest of the country by Islam is not improbable, because civilisation, as it comes to these people, wears an outspoken islamic stamp.

On Christian Mission work among the Shilluks vide the end of Introduction.

V. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS.

RESIDENCE OF THE KING

The Shilluks are the only people of the Sudan who have a Kingdom [1]. The king resides at Fashoda. His residence consists in a large number of huts for himself, his numerous wives and other members of his family and for guests. He possesses large herds of cattle, goats and sheep. When a person of some respect pays him a visit, the king presents him with an ox. — The royal robe consists in a leopard skin. They have also a coronation robe of leopard skin and ostrich feathers, which has been handed down from many generations. The present king has a gorgeous red robe presented by the governor, which he wears on occasions when he meets the higher English officials.

ELECTION

The kingdom of the Shilluks is hereditary in so far as the king must always be a member of the royal family, that is, of the descendants of Nyikang, and only a person whose father has been a king, may be elected. There are three houses of the royal family, and the king is elected from each of these royal branches in turn. If there are several brothers in the branch whose turn it is to have the kingship, upon the death of the king one of these brothers will be elected. But in case there is no vacancy during the life of these three brothers, then the sons of the eldest will be in line for the throne.

Fadyet is the present king. He is of the house of Kwat Ker. When he dies, the kingship will pass to the house of *Yẽ*; at the death of the king from the house of *Yẽ* it will be the turn of the house of *Nyâk*. Thence it will return to the house of Kwat Ker, but not to a son of *Fadyet*, but to one of the king's brothers. When it has gone around the circle again, it will be the turn of a son of *Fadyet*. There seem to be two branches of each house, so that when a king dies, it will be the turn of his eldest son to become king, after five kings have reigned and died. There have been other royal houses, but they have lost their

[1] "king" is in Shilluk *rẽl* or *ryel*; in older literature the word "bondo" is given as the Shilluk name for king. By Europeans the king is commonly called mek, which is a construction of the Arab malik.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

233 [492] Tribal custom forbids the Shulla from riding upon a donkey, so he never possesses one. Cattle are never used for draught or carrying purposes, so he has no beasts of burden, and perhaps never will so long as women are plentiful.

231 [262] The villages are full of hunting dogs. Unlike the Nuers and most of the Dinkas the Shulla raise chickens. They are a degenerate Mediterranean strain. Eggs are eaten only by women and children.

Animal life must be well guarded and carefully housed at night most of the year. If an animal loiters on the river bank it most likely becomes the food of a crocodile. If one strays off into the woods it probably becomes the prey of a hyena, leopard or lion. Myriads of flies and numerous varieties of ticks also prey upon the flocks and herds, tormenting them by night as well as by day, and transmit the germs of various diseases also. Texas or tick fever is nearly always present, and a trypanosome not so fatal as the one of dreaded tsetse fly is also prevalent. The plague is a frequent visitor too and the mouth and foot diseases often attack the cattle toward the close of the dry season. The annual loss from all these enemies of animal life is very heavy, but as no females, unless barren, are ever killed for food or sold, and grass is plentiful, on the whole there is an increase in the number of live stock raised.

241 [797 •177] As to the possibilities of agriculture in the Shulla land obstacles to be overcome have been mentioned. What the mission has done shows that many varieties of fruits and a considerable number of vegetables may be grown. Future generations may have lumber, if the right varieties of forest trees are planted. Cotton is not a sure rain crop, but with irrigation it has few enemies. Sugar-cane and rice can be grown in favorable places. The soil of this part of the Sudan is not generally deep, is deficient in nitrogen and very poor in humus. Nitrogen may be restored with legumes, but the humus problem is difficult, for the white ants devour very quickly all manure, mulch etc. spred upon the ground.

243 The Shulla in sticking to the one main crop of dura has after all adopted the grain which is naturally adapted to the soil and climate and yields best to his methods of farming.

5. Foods and food-stuffs.

262

kwʃa a kind of dura-bread or mush.

ddʃlʃ a food of dura.

dpʃlʃ a food of dura.

drʃyʃ a food of dura (prepared after Arab fashion).

ddʃlʃ a food of dura (prepared after Arab fashion).

ngʃcngʃ a food of dura with fat, eaten without anything else.

ngʃddʃlʃ a common dura-food.

made at all times of stress and misfortune. Everything round a shrine is sacred, especially trees - they are particularly rare in Shillukland in any case.

Certain Shilluk kings, particular incarnations of Nyikang, tend to be identified with particular species of animals. If such an animal approaches the shrine without signs of fear, it is assumed to be the form in which Nyikang appears, and a sacrifice is offered at the shrine. Almost any unusual behaviour on the part of an animal would lead the Shilluk to look on it as a temporary incarnation of Nyikang. Nyikang's mother, Nikaiwe, is reputed to have been a crocodile and is believed to live in the river in that form. A sacrifice is made to her by throwing a live sheep into the river. The crocodile is generally spared even though these creatures are a danger in river crossings.

There is a limited cult of the Dinka spirit Dengsit, and also a belief in the spirits of the bush and river.

THE CULT OF THE ANCESTORS

Beliefs concerning the ancestral spirits are vague. Reference is made to *pun juok*, 'the country of the dead', which is reached by the spirit after long wandering through the bush, but it is also believed that the spirit persists in or around the grave. Offerings and sacrifices are made to the ancestral spirits by the head of a household or local lineage on behalf of the descendants. If there is sickness or misfortune or the possibility of danger, a person will pray to his ancestors and make an animal sacrifice to propitiate them.

The ancestral cult seems, however, to be overshadowed by the national cult of Nyikang and the royal ancestors.

TOTEMIC BELIEFS

Seligman suggests that Shilluk totemism may have been derived from the Dinka because it seems so slight and unimportant. According to Hofmayr and Westermann the clans appear to have totems and some clans derive themselves from an animal or fish which Nyikang took and turned into people in order to populate the country. Hofmayr states that totem animals are often killed but it is considered wrong to eat them.(1) Most totems are animals but a few are plants. Children inherit their totems from their fathers; a woman keeps hers even when she is married.(2)

MAGICAL PRACTICES

The Witchdoctor (Ajuago)

Ajuago means 'man of Juok'. Such people are regarded as possessing certain magical powers which they use for the good of the community. People go to them when they are in need of help and pay them for their assistance. The powers of the ajuago are believed to be due to their

(1) Hofmayr, *Die Schilluk*, 1925, p.235.
(2) *Ibid.*

5:Lienhardt E-4 (no date) 1954 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

THE SHILLUK OF THE UPPER NILE

By GODFREY LIENHARDT

121 THIS essay is based primarily on literary sources,[1] which contain unusually full references to the religious and cosmological ideas of the Shilluk. In places, I have reinterpreted earlier writings on the Shilluk, in the light of my own knowledge of the related Dinka, and of other 171 Nilotic studies. The concepts of these Nilotic peoples are alike in many ways, and the Shilluk and Dinka have for long been considered as related, from the point of view of anthropological theory, by the presence among them both of different forms of the institution of 'divine kingship', studied by Frazer and Seligman.[2] Upon this institution much of their interpretation of the universe and of their own place in it depend.

[111] Lack of definition and dogma in their religion and cosmology makes it
177 possible for Nilotic peoples to accept many different versions of their mythology and history, and also permits some syncretism of belief. I do not consider here speculations about the possible influences of ancient Egypt, the Fung, Islam, or the early monophysite Christianity of the Sudan, on Shilluk belief.[3] It is, in fact, remarkable that contact with foreign peoples and ideas, over a long period, should have left so little mark on Shilluk thought. Some of the stories which Hofmayr[4] attributes to Christian in- [114] fluence are widely known among other Nilotic peoples and elsewhere, in places farther removed from probable contact with Christianity. Lack of
772 formal definition of beliefs and notions about the universe also makes the
124 study of Shilluk cosmology necessarily a study based on inferences from
[127] myths, hymns, and other texts, collected piecemeal from informants, none of whom can speak with any final authority. It is clear that Shilluk cosmology is not present to the mind of any one Shilluk as a single, orthodox system, [538] abstracted from the narrative flow and imaginative detail of myth. Even one man may tell slightly different versions of the same story,[5] for the telling is

[1] References throughout are to the Shilluk bibliography appended, the dates being the dates of the publications cited. Some of the sources contain many texts in the Shilluk language, and where these are translated into a language other than English, I have given an English version after examining the Shilluk text. I should like to thank all writers on the Shilluk, upon whose observations this summary and representation entirely depend. Their publications, however, are not all easily accessible, nor are they specifically concerned with the analysis of the Shilluk ideas here studied. This must be my excuse for writing about a people of great ethnological interest and importance, who have already been described in detail by writers who have known them well.

[2] J. G. Frazer, 1911. C. G. Seligman, 1911, C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, 1932.

[3] Discussion of Shilluk contacts with some of these will be found in W. Hofmayr, 1925, and D. Westermann, 1912. For general cultural and conceptual similarities between ancient Egypt and negro Africa, the reader may be referred to C. G. Seligman, 1934, and H. Frankfort, 1948, among others.

[4] 1925, pp. 193–6, the stories of a fall of man, and of a woman's bearing a god.

[5] D. B. Oyler, 1918 (i).

[p. 138]

5:Lienhardt E-4 (no date) 1954 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Linguistically, the Shilluk belong to the Luo-speaking people, amongst whom are also the Anuak of the Baro and Pibor rivers between the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Ethiopia, the Lango and Acholi of Uganda, the Alur of Uganda and the Belgian Congo, and many scattered groups in the Bahr-el-Ghazal Province of the Sudan, of whom the Luo (Jur) are the most important. Some of these claim some slight contact, in comparatively recent times, with the Shilluk kingdom. Amongst the Luo-speakers the Shilluk are unique in their possession of a single royal dynasty, in relation to which all are members of one Shilluk kingdom, with well-defined territorial and social limits. By this also they are chiefly set apart from the other Nilotic negroes, the Nuer and Dinka, with whom they otherwise have much in common in physique, character, and culture. Perhaps more than the other Nilotes, the Shilluk have for long been in intermittently hostile contact with foreign enemies and foreign governments. The traveller Schweinfurth, who visited them in 1869, says that at that time little or nothing remained of the original condition of the Shilluk, who of all Nilotic negroes 'used to uphold the most perfectly regulated government', which, he says, can only be properly appreciated by reference to the registers of the expedition of Mohammed Ali earlier in the century.[1] We cannot now know what the Shilluk were really like at that time, and it is certain that some of their indigenous custom, particularly that concerning the election and disposal of the Shilluk king, has been interfered with to such an extent that the Shilluk themselves are uncertain about some details of the old belief and practice. Nevertheless, until the present day the Shilluk have retained a consciousness of their national identity and integrity, and have been slow to modify their ideas to accord with those of the various strangers in their land. The main features of their social structure remain, and under the present government, versions of their ceremonies for the funeral and installation of the king have been carefully observed and described.[2] Enough of the traditional practice and belief remains, and has been recorded, to make unnecessary too much speculative reconstruction of the Shilluk past; unfortunately the absence of historical records makes it impossible to study the development of the kingship, which might explain some apparent anomalies in accounts of the present situation.

Social Organization

The Shilluk are divided, on the basis of descent traced in the male line, into about 100 different descent groups, which have been called both clans and lineages. They are exogamous, and some of them, at least, are totemically affiliated with natural or artificial species of various kinds. Members of these descent groups may be found living in any part of Shilluk country, and the main groups are themselves dispersed in smaller groups throughout Shilluk country. The largest descent groups are without any corporate

[1] G. Schweinfurth, 1873, p. 93.
[2] P. Munro, 1918, and Howell and Thomson, 1946.

141
304

Card No	C.I.	N.I.	F.I.	U.F.I.	S.(cm)	incisors	marks L	R	B	A	dots	C.I.	N.I.	S
B 7	73.6	88.0			180.8		+		+		26			
C 8	73.4	96.2			173.1			+	+				+	
D 7	67.0	86.7	87.7	49.6	174.6	+		+			28	+		
B 1	71.3	87.7			184.8		+				21			
D 9	67.4	79.2	93.0	70.4	181.1		+				31			
	[illegible]													
	71.5	87.9			179.2									
	[illegible]													
D 3	70.2	85.1			165.7	+	+							

The sign + means that the people practice knocking out lower incisors, or body marks.
L = Left upper arm and shoulder / R= right upper arm and shoulder B= Back A= Abdomen

the minimum the maximum

Tribal Marks.

304 619 [114] The most important tribal mark among the Shilluk is one row of dots or scars on the forhead called TAI which extends from near the ear to the other ear, crossing the temples. The old generations have three rows of these dots.(12) Butt writes that "Shilluk men and women have three to five rows of dots or scars....(13) but I was unable to discover any Shilluk man or woman who had these five rows of TAI. Butt may have confused this scarification with that of the Nuer and the Dinka who make five to seven deep cuts on the forehead. A profile of a Shilluk man or woman will betray a strong resemblance to someone who has a necklace of black or brown beads stretched across his forehead. These dots are of no fixed number.(14) They vary according to the breadth of the face and the forehead. No Shilluk is exempted from this mark, but in my study I found one old fellow from the royal family (15) who happened to be born in Metemma, north of Khartoum, as his mother was taken captive during the Mahdi - Shilluk war. He lived about twenty years in the north, then he came home, even having lost his Shilluk tongue. He had no TAI.

1/4 184 304 619 304 ● 177 [753] The most important tribal mark is the knocking out of the lower incisors. Seligmann wrote (16) that the royal offshoots till the fourth generation "... follow the royal practice of retaining their lower central incisors instead of having them knocked out as commoners do..." Butt also says: " Among the Shilluk the royal family alone keep their tooth intact." (17) From the results I have obtained and illustrated in table "C" we can make two observations:
a) that not a l l commoners practice the knocking out of their incisors,
b) that some royal members practice it.
The Shilluk told me that this practice was universal among the commoners in the past, but now it is practiced at will. The old belief was that the failure to knock out teeth caused sickness. It must have been contact with the Arabs that changed this belief, and with this contact the habit is going to die out.

Other body marks are also made at will and have no religious significance. The people say that it is nice to have these marks on the body, especially for young men and women and for dancing festivals. These marks take many forms - scorpion, tiger, geometrical designs, or even military signs, especially that of a sergeant on the upper arm.

Clothes.

Hofmayer states that "... So gross die Aufmerksamkeit und Vorliebe für Putz und Schmuck, so gering die Sorge für die Kleider."(18) He also writes: " Abgesehen der Mann in Shillukländer fast immer ohne Kleidung ging, stand es mit dem Weibe in dieser Hinsicht anders." (19) and " Langsam begannen nun auch unter diesem Volke, seitdem christliche Kultur und Religion ins Land gezogen ist, Anzeichen einer besseren Zeit sich einzustellen. Bereits kann man die Nacktheit der Shilluk von diesem Stande als verschwunden betrachten." (20). During my sojourn among the Shilluk I noticed one great difference among the Shilluk and the other Nilotic tribes , this being that the Shilluk were always dressed - at towns as well as in their own villages, children being the only exception - and others were not. Their dress is called in their own tongue LAUD, and consists of a piece of cloth of any colour, but mainly white. The LAUD is placed round the body, so that it reaches down to the knees and is knotted in a special way on the left shoulder by men (21) and the right shoulder by women. Women also wear some other underclothing which is well described by Hofmayer.(22) But the question is that the LAUD is a standard Shilluk dress; it is neither European nor Arabic from the northern Sudan. It stands unique and the Nuer or the Dinka, who are supposed to have some kinship with the Shilluk, go, men and women , quite naked. Hofmayer's statement, as quoted above, was written in 1925. It is quite impossible that the Shilluk have altered one of the most important habits over a period of 30 or 30 years, taking into account the extremely conservative spirit which all authors attribute to the Shilluk and other Nilotes. Secondly, if the Shilluk men began to dress due to the introduction of Christian culture and religion, they would have adopted the European dress, (23) rather than invent a new type of dress foreign to both missionaries and Shalams. Or, if this were due to Christian culture, why did it not produce the same effect among the Dinka and Nuer, among whom comparatively more missionary work has been done than among the Shilluk ? Hofmayer contradicts himself in the same book. Cwl, the second Shilluk king, who lived about 1580 A.D., before he died, washed himself, and " Nach vollendeter Waschung kleidete Cwl sich an.." (24). This means that the Shilluk used to dress themselves from the beginning of their known history.

I have also no knowledge of a society in which the differences between the two sexes go, or went, as far as that which we could understand from Hofmayer's description, i.e. men go naked while women have a complicated dress system composed of two pieces for the unmarried and of three pieces for the married.

There is also a traditional ceremony of importance in the Shilluk political organisation. Every new chief of a settlement, which is a combined group of lineage hamlets, has to be confirmed in his post by the king. This takes the form of investing the new chief with a LAUD with the king "personally knotting this robe over the jago's (chief) shoulder" (25). In a similar manner, the chief of a hamlet (a lineage group, homesteads in a settlement) may be invested with a LAUD "directly from the king, or from the settlement) may be

[18] "such great attention and predilection the dress and ornamentation, so little care for the children"

[19] " while the men in Shillut country almost always went without clothing, the women behaved differently in this respect."

[20] Slowly in the beginning, but since that time Christian culture and religion has also penetrated among these people, A sign that a better time is coming. Already one can see that the nakedness of the Shilluk is disappearing from this country."

29/ invested with a LAUO, " directly from the King, or from the settlement chief."
62 (26) This ceremony shows clearly that the LAUO plays a symbolic role in the
643 Shilluk political institutions. (27) These institutions are more or less matters of tradition , and traditions are rarely changed in a conservative society.

29/ I have dwelt at length upon this problem, not only to criticize Hofmayer, but mainly to direct attention to one of the most important cultural characteristics of the Shilluk, in comparison with other Nilotic groups, and to show that this is not a newly acquired custom, but has deep roots in the past that can be explained by cultural contact or diffusion that affected only the Shilluk.

Notes.

113 (1) Seligman, C.G. & B. Z.; Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan. London 1932 P.40
(2) Hofmeyer, J., Die Shilluk, Wien 1925. p 247.
63 (3) The word means the "meeting-place of the people".
(4) Tothill, J.D., Agriculture in the Sudan, London 1948. p.815
(5) Ibid, pp. 820/821
(6) Ibid, p. 812
(7) Seligman, B. Notes and Queries in Anthropology, London.
(8) " C.G., Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan, London 1932, p 13
(9) Hofmeyer J., Die Shilluk. Wien 1925. p 19
(10) Seligman, C.G., Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, No 11 London 1910, pp. 514/517
The figures in brackets indicate the number of persons measured.
(11) Seligmann, C.G., Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan. London 1932, p. 418
(12) see above, Table "G" No A 4, and A 1, have three lines.
(13) Butt A., 1952, p 28
(14) see above, table "G"
(15) see above , table "G", card No B 3, he was the son of king Yor, who adopted the name of Omar, and converted to Islam.
(16) Seligman C.G., Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan. London 1932, p 49
(17) Butt, A., 1952, p 28
(18) Hofmeyer, J., Die Shilluk, Wien 1925. p 344
(19) Ibid, p. 345
(20) Ibid, p. 345
[114] (21) This may be explained by the wish to let the right arm always free to throw spears or anything else. Also Seligman (1932, p 43) erred when he said that " the inhabitants of a village, Pathour, mark a scorpion several inches in length... on the shoulder - left for men and right for women- so that it is not hidden by the shoulder cloth."
(22) Hofmeyer, J., 1925, p 345/346
[117] (23) This is the case I have observed: the Shilluk who comes under the influence of missions or who was converted to Christianity uses European shorts and shirts, and the Shilluk who was converted to Islam wears the usual Arab white dress, with a turban.
(24) Hofmeyer, J., 1925. p 39
(25) Butt, A., The Nilotes of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Uganda, London 1925. p. 30
(26) Ibid, p 30
[71] (27) There is a similar ceremony among the Bung of investing the new chiefs with a head dress.

8:Howell E-4,5 (1937, 1948) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SHILLUK OF THE UPPER NILE

CUSTOMARY LAW: MARRIAGE AND THE VIOLATION OF RIGHTS IN WOMEN

P. P. HOWELL

IN a previous article on the Shilluk[1] I discussed the laws of homicide and the legal and ritual functions of the *reth* or King. An interpretation of Shilluk law and authority is not easy because, apart from early contacts with the peoples of the northern Sudan, they have been subjected to external influences and some kind of Government since the early years of the last century. These contacts began with cursory and not altogether happy encounters with the Turco-Egyptian Government which were followed by the establishment of a provincial headquarters at Kodok in 1867 under the authority of a *mudir*; later came the turbulent and dismal years of the *Mahdia* and finally the occupation by the present Government in 1898. It would be idle to suppose that the political system of the Shilluk has remained unaffected by these influences. The Shilluk are by reputation an exceptionally conservative people and certainly the effects of their relations with outsiders are, to the casual observer, hard to detect. Profound changes have taken place none the less, especially in the sphere of customary law, and these changes are undoubtedly gathering momentum.

By 'law' I mean simply those customary rules governing human relationships from which there has developed a body of rules classed as 'customary law' (sometimes 'native law and custom') administered under the Chiefs' Court Ordinance of 1931, and more or less consistently applied in the tribunals established by the Government.

These courts have now largely taken the place of the ultimate sanction for conformity with accepted rules of conduct, for the fulfilment of recognized duties and the composition of all disputes, which was formerly the resort to force by the injured party and his supporters. It is my opinion that the ordered indigenous administrative system of the Shilluk, so enthusiastically described by some writers, and the organized repressive measures alleged to have been undertaken by the *reth*, are not only exaggerated, but also, in part, derive from contacts with alien governments. At any rate it is more than probable that no system existed among the Shilluk whereby all wrongs were righted by the direct intervention of the *reth* and his representatives.

We are not here concerned with political systems, but with the nature of customary law as it is applied today. This law is at basis derived from customary procedures in which arbitration and compromise prevailed; but in recent years it has acquired a consistency, and in some cases a rigidity, probably unknown in the past. A body of case law has arisen from precedents made in the courts, and although some laws may derive from the direct intervention of the Administration, others are part of a purely spontaneous process. It is also noticeable that many claims now upheld

[1] 'Observations on the Shilluk of the Upper Nile: The laws of homicide and the legal functions of the *reth*.' *Africa*, xxii. 2, 1952. I am again indebted to the Sudan Government for permission to quote from official reports and to Mr. W. P. G. Thomson and Mr. J. L. Baker for comments and suggestions.

8:Howell E-4,5 (1937, 1948) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

localized lineage within one settlement is certainly exogamous and there is also a bar to marriage into the maternal lineage. The clan, widely distributed in minor branches throughout Shilluk country, does not function as a corporate unit except at times of national festivals and then only in the sphere of cerêmonial and ritual.

Marriage and Marriage Laws

As with the Nuer and Dinka, marriage among the Shilluk is achieved by the performance of recognized social procedures and the payment of bridewealth in the form of cattle, sheep, and goats. Nowadays, cash may be paid in addition to or in lieu of cattle, but not frequently and not in large sums.[1] It must be emphasized from the start that the Shilluk do not possess anything like the number of cattle owned by the Nuer and Dinka,[2] and for this reason alone the number of beasts paid as bridewealth is lower. Among the Nuer and Dinka the average ranges from fifteen to forty head of cattle according to the prevailing condition of the herds. Among the Shilluk the number is fixed at ten head, and although there have been times when few Shilluk were able to pay this number, it has been retained rigidly for several generations despite attempts by the Administration to reduce it. With sheep and goats, which are paid in addition but do not have the same significance, there is no such rigidity. The number of these seems to vary according to the attractions of the bride, though prevailing economic conditions doubtless play their part.

There is much to be found on the subject of marriage in the writings of Hofmayr, Westermann, and Seligman,[3] though many statements are misleading. This summary account of Shilluk marriage laws is based largely on the writings, both published and unpublished, of M. E. C. Pumphrey[4] who not only took into account previous literature but, as an administrator in Shilluk country for several years, had better opportunities to investigate the legal aspect of the subject. These are supplemented by my own direct observations.[5]

The Social Processes and Legality of Marriage

Pumphrey says:

> The marriage tie creates an obligation to pay cattle, but it is not created by or dependent upon such payment. To render a union a marriage only two things are essential. First there must be no positive barrier (such as known consanguinity between the parties . . .) and secondly there must be an offer and an acceptance. The offer and acceptance are symbolised by the man offering the woman's *gol*[6] a sheep (*dyel dhok*). Acceptance of this sheep signifies acceptance of the suitor. The marriage is then complete.[7]

This transaction, which is limited to the immediate family of the parties to the marriage, is followed by *tieng mogho* (the brewing of beer) and a wedding dance (*mogho thiek*) to which many persons are invited and which therefore serves to make the union widely known. It is not, however, strictly correct to say that the marriage is,

[1] The tendency to use cash in lieu of cattle is apparently increasing.

[2] Ratio of human to cattle population: Shilluk 1:0·25; Nuer 1:3·3 (highest recorded).

[3] See Bibliography of the Shilluk, given in a previous article (*Africa*, xxii. 2).

[4] Pumphrey, 'The Shilluk Tribe', *J.N.R.*, vol. xxiv, 1941.

[5] Based on field work carried out in 1937 and on an investigation and analysis of the marriages of one Shilluk lineage carried out in 1948. The results are to be published later.

[6] Family group and legal guardians.

[7] Pumphrey, op. cit., p. 83.

8:Howell E-4.5 (1937, 1948) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Shilluk were perhaps more prosperous cattle-owners and the rates of bridewealth were higher.

There is in fact no evidence that the number of cattle paid as bridewealth was ever higher than ten, though it may have been so in the era preceding Turkish times. During the *Mahdia*, and for some time after, when the Shilluk had even less cattle than they have now, the transfer of more than two head as bridewealth seems to have been exceptional. But in the more prosperous period which followed, when cattle increased, there was an aftermath of claims dating back to marriages contracted at an earlier date. Some of these claims were upheld in the Courts established by the Government; a procedure which no doubt fostered the belief that the rate of ten head of cattle was unalterable and amounted to the enforcement of obligations which would not otherwise have been honoured. Latterly, the Administration has made attempts to reduce the bridewealth rate. At times in recent years, presumably after epidemics which have sometimes nearly halved the cattle population in the course of twelve months, ten head of cattle as bridewealth has been excessive, with varying results all naturally considered undesirable by the Administration. First, there has been a marked increase in litigation over bridewealth claims. Young men, having started the processes of marriage and made some initial payments of cattle, have then absconded with their brides and refused to honour further obligations. Second, since suitable husbands with sufficient cattle are not to be found, Shilluk girls, unable to marry the men of their choice, in an age when some degree of emancipation has been the result of alien government, tend to drift into the towns as concubines and prostitutes.[2] This process has an equally undesirable corollary. The young men, unable to marry, are more inclined to illicit love affairs, with the result that adultery has increased with a consequent rise in litigation. Finally, the Shilluk have taken to marrying their daughters to Nuer or Dinka who are easily able to find the ten head of cattle required. This process, though not necessarily undesirable in itself, has the effect of aggravating the position, because Shilluk men find it even harder to acquire wives. Without this absorption of Shilluk girls by intermarriage with other tribes or by the process of detribalization, their guardians might be prepared to accept smaller numbers of cattle as they undoubtedly did during the impoverished times of the *Mahdia*.

There have been many discussions, recorded in Government files, of the necessity for reducing the amount of bridewealth and it is clear that Shilluk chiefs and notables have themselves been acutely aware of the need to do so. Yet, despite resolutions made at Shilluk Council meetings, no alteration has in fact occurred.

Divorce and the Dissolution of Marriage

Divorce laws among the Shilluk are, in principle though not in detail, similar to those current among other Nilotic tribes. We must here distinguish between what may be called 'active divorce', when both parties are still living, and 'dissolution of legal union', which sometimes follows the death of the wife.

[2] Encouraged perhaps by the removal of customary deterrents. The 10th meeting of the Shilluk Council (1935) records: 'Chiefs are warned that the following customary "punishments" for a woman are forbidden and will be followed by imprisonment:
(1) Tying her up in a net and half drowning her.
(2) Tying her up outside at night for the mosquitos to bite her.
(3) Smoking her in a closed up house
(4) Sticking thorns up her finger nails.
The Government does not object to the lawful guardian of a woman or a girl giving her reasonable correction with the palm of his hand, or a light whip, but beating with a stick is also forbidden'

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 776 The all-powerful being who exists in the minds of the Shilluk as a remote and amoral deity is called Juok. The principal medium through whom Juok is approached is Nyikang, but the distinction between them is not well defined. 'Nyikang is Juok but Juok is not Nyikang'[1] for Nyikang is also a mythological figure who takes his place in Shilluk history as the culture-hero of the Shilluk people,[2] the founder of the royal house; as the soul of Nyikang is reincarnate in every Shilluk *reth*, he thus exists both in the past and in the present. Nyikang is the *reth*: the *reth* is Nyikang. This paradox of the unity yet separation of the three is not easy to define and the Shilluk would find it difficult to explain. Juok, Nyikang, and the ruling *reth* represent the line through which divinity runs, a conception which is similar to the ancestor cult, but the cult is associated with the tribe as a whole rather than with the royal clan (*kwareth*) or any other more restricted kinship group. The *reth* is himself the medium through whom both Nyikang and, more vaguely, Juok are approached and is the human intercessor for mankind with God. Voluntarily by ritual acts, involuntarily by reason of his very existence, the *reth* affects the fortunes and fertility of the tribe and controls the natural phenomena which react upon crops and cattle. The *reth* is therefore the central figure of tribal religion as well as the symbol of political unity. He is responsible for the welfare and fortunes of the people both spiritually, as the present manifestation of Nyikang, and temporally, but less clearly, as the leading tribal authority. 'The Shilluk would not seriously dispute the *reth*'s divine attributes (unless a follower of some alien religion),[3] though some might resist his more mundane powers.'[4]

The Problem of Authority

● 177 643 648 The extent of the *reth*'s authority is naturally of considerable importance to an analysis of Shilluk law and legal procedures, especially in the past, and an answer must be attempted even though the evidence is scanty and it is now probably too late to obtain more. The first factor of great importance in this discussion is historical, for the Shilluk have not been entirely free of alien government since 1867 and external influences prior to that date, so that, whatever the political authority of the *reth* may have been previously, since then it has been influenced by external forces. Moreover, not only the present Government, but also the Turco-Egyptian administration, appear to have attempted a rudimentary form of what in Africa has been called '*Indirect Rule*', through the agency of the *reth*. However unsuccessful this may have been, it must have increased the powers of the *reth* to some extent and given to him an authority which in the past he may well not have possessed. This argument is not, I think, affected by the fact that so many *reths* suffered sudden death or exile at the hands of their own people or the Turks; but it is significant that during the Turkish régime the position of the *reth* was nearly always insecure. He was at any time liable to be ambushed and killed by an ambitious *nyireth*[5] who hoped to gain the support of the Shilluk people and supplant him as reigning monarch. This potential opposition

[1] Howell and Thomson, op. cit., p. 8.

[2] The meaning of Nyikang in Shilluk society will not be discussed here in detail. There is considerable literature on the subject which is listed in the Bibliography.

[3] The Dinka cult of Deng has sometimes found favour with certain Shilluk individuals and as such is subversive of the status of the *reth*, though it has never provided a serious threat.

[4] Howell and Thomson, op. cit., p. 9.

[5] Son of a *reth* who has reigned and therefore a claimant to the throne. See Howell and Thomson, op. cit., p. 11, and Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

is in accordance with Shilluk tradition, but the kings prior to this period appear to have had a stability of tenure unknown during the latter half of the nineteenth century.[1] The opposition sprang from resentment of an excessive and often oppressive use of the powers accorded to him and also from a reaction to the interference of an alien government, for many of the *reths* of that period were no more than puppets.

reth Kwathker, who was the *reth* of the Shilluk at the time of the first arrival of the Turkish 'Mudir' at Fashoda, was deposed and replaced by a nominee called Ajang Nyidhok, who was never accepted by the southern Shilluk.[2] A civil war between the north and the Government on one side supporting Ajang, and the south supporting Kwathker followed. The south was defeated, and Kwathker died in chains at Fashoda.[3] Ajang was himself deposed shortly afterwards and the Turks attempted to administer the Shilluk without a *reth* at all. This policy was, however, entirely unsuccessful and, after a clash which resulted in a massacre of Government troops at Kaka in 1875, Kweikon, son of Kwathker, was installed as *reth*. A few years later Kweikon joined the Turkish troops in their attack on the forces of the Mahdi at Jebel Gadir. The Turkish and Shilluk forces were annihilated and Kweikon was killed. Subsequently, after a period of interregnum, Yor, son of *reth* Akoc, who had visited the Mahdi and received his support, installed himself at Fashoda. The support of the *Mahdia*, however, did not continue under the régime of the Khalifa Abdullahi, and Yor was finally captured and beheaded by the Emir Zeki Tumal near Tonga. His successor was Kur, another son of *reth* Nyidhok, who was a Mahdist puppet and called by them Abdel Fadil. During Kur's absence in Omdurman, Akol, a son of Kwathker, supported by the southern Shilluk attempted a *coup d'état*, but was unsuccessful owing to the intervention of the northern Shilluk. The present Government arrived in 1898, and Kur remained in power until 1903, when he was deposed for 'unjust and oppressive' actions against his people. He was replaced by Fadiet, a Government nominee, who died in 1917. After a show of opposition by the southern Shilluk, who supported Coti, son of *reth* Ajang, Fafiti, son of Yor, was finally installed at Fashoda in 1917 and ruled until 1943. He was followed in quick succession by Anei wad Kur, who died less than two years after his installation, and Dak wad Fadiet, who died in 1951. The present *reth*-elect, not yet formally installed, is Kur wad Fafiti.

Throughout this period, administration was carried out through the agency of the *reth*, although there were frequent attempts to increase the authority of local chiefs, formed into Chiefs' Courts. It may be noted also that there were occasional attempts to oust Fafiti in favour of rivals, the most notable of whom was Nyawelo wad Kur who was exiled in 1932. These attempts were, however, severely suppressed by the Government and it is impossible even to guess whether they would have been successful, if the reigning *reth* had not enjoyed an artificial stability of tenure provided by the Government. During this period the policy of the Government was to establish tribunals throughout the country from which final appeal lay to the *reth* himself. The extent of the jurisdiction of these tribunals has varied considerably from time to time, the boundaries being altered, for administrative convenience, to approximate to the

[1] See Hofmayr, *Die Schilluk*, 1925, and also Westermann, *The Shilluk People*, 1912, on traditions about the early *reths*.

[2] Howell and Thomson, op. cit., p. 75, i.e. those living in Lusk. The division into Lusk and Gerr has had not only ritual but political significance.

[3] Kodok—Turkish Province Headquarters and called by them Fashoda. Fashoda is in fact the capital of the *reth* and lies some fifteen miles south of Kodok.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

traditional divisions of Shilluk country. From the early years of administration, with frequent minor adjustments, until 1949 these divisions were eleven in number,[1] but they were recently amalgamated to form five.

These historical factors have been summarized here to show how difficult it is to formulate definite conclusions on the *reth*'s political authority. According to tradition and to what the Shilluk will often themselves say, he has absolute powers of intervention to suppress public disturbances, to give judgement in certain disputes and, moreover, to execute those judgements. In fact, in recent years, and possibly at times during the latter half of the nineteenth century, this theoretical authority has had the backing of an alien government and may for this reason have been exaggerated beyond what was actually enforceable in earlier times. There is, therefore, throughout Shilluk history in the last hundred years a divergence of theory and fact, and one does not know how much of the theory has been created by external influences. It will be realized that this problem is also of some importance in a theoretical study of primitive legal systems, for we wish to know whether the laws were, in fact, enforceable, whether the Shilluk monarchy, apart from external influences, represents 'politically organized society', and whether certain laws were enforced and legal sanctions applied in such a manner as to justify the use of the term 'public law'.

There is little evidence of legal procedures during the Turkish régime and none during the *Mahdia*. Schweinfurth writing, in 1868, a lucid account of a Shilluk dispute heard by the Turkish 'Mudir' or Governor at Fashoda, says: 'He (the Mudir) was continually being called upon to adjust the disputes of natives, who appealed to his judgement even in their most private concerns. . . .' After describing the unsuccessful plea of a Shilluk girl for permission to marry her lover who had not enough cattle to pay the bridewealth, he adds, 'This was not a very comforting decision, but it showed me plainly how that it was ever his rule to recognize the customs of the country'.[2] Schweinfurth also gives a vivid picture of the Shilluk king at this period.

> In the Mudir's verandah I also made acquaintance with a Shillook chief, who had entirely surrendered to the Egyptian Government, and was now, as the Governor expressed himself, 'coming to his senses.' There was no external indication whatever of his rank. . . . He retained now but a shadow of his former power; his better days were gone, days in which, attended by a council of ancestral state, he had swayed the sceptre of patriarchal dignity. Of all the negro races which occupy the entire district of the Nile, the Shillooks used to uphold the most perfectly regulated government. . . . But now this condition is all changed, and everything has disappeared which gave this independent and primitive people their most striking characteristics.[3]

There are, of course, other references to the indigenous administration of the Shilluk based on the division of the country into provinces and settlements with a representative of the *reth* in charge of each, and the *reth* himself as the ultimate authority. Many writers therefore assume that there existed a highly organized system; more highly organized than the evidence warrants. It is natural that the present

[1] See Howell and Thomson, op. cit., p. 6.

[2] Schweinfurth, G., *The Heart of Africa*, London, 1878.

[3] Schweinfurth, op. cit., p. 19. He is here referring to the Turkish puppet Ajang wad Nyidhuk. He mentions later that 'Kaqar' (presumably Kwathker), another descendant of the ancient reigning family, still maintained himself as an 'uncontrolled sovereign' in the southern part of the Shilluk country.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Government, with periodic modifications, has utilized existing divisions of the country as administrative units, and has drawn its agents from the dominant lineages of each, thus creating a hierarchy of chiefs responsible to the *reth* himself; but this is not necessarily evidence that such a system was a reality in the past. On this subject Pumphrey expresses the opinion that, 'The power of the *Reths* before the Turkish interference was undoubtedly great. It was based partly on the semi-divinity with which tribal tradition clothes them and partly upon their great wealth in cattle and slaves. Justice was probably rough and large-scale fighting more prevalent than litigation, such law-suits as there were being seen, as previously mentioned, either by the settlement chief or by the *Reth* at Fashoda.' He adds in a footnote that 'The *Reth* is said to have had the enviable privilege of killing a tiresome litigant with a club.'[1] In an unpublished record Pumphrey goes farther than this and says:

I do not think it is true to say that as far back as Shilluk tradition goes, there is a system of administration and Courts with the *reth* at the head of it and powers descending through the heads of provinces, whom we call Court Chiefs, to heads of sections down to the village headman. . . . Naturally as one Chief or another attained to local prestige, he would tend to attract cases to him, and certainly for a period the princesses of Dettim used to see local cases. There were, however, only four regular offices under the *reth*. The Chiefs of Luak and Gerr lived on either side of Fashoda and were his right-hand men. The Chiefs of Muomo and Tonga were chiefs of the marches whose definite job it was to keep a look out for invading enemies. Apart from this, however, the Chiefs of the marches were also the *reth*'s representatives in the two extremes of the country and used both to see cases themselves and send along to Fashoda those cases which they thought the *reth* should see. Beneath these four officials were the Chiefs (*jyak*) i.e. holders of the *lau*.[2] Our present 'Section Chiefs' are only *some* of them *lau* holders, for the reason that 'sections' (occasionally somewhat arbitrarily formed) contain usually several original villages and each village has a *lau* (by an 'original village' I mean the parent village of a group of off shoots of villages). It was through these *jyak* and through these four senior officials that the Shilluk country used to be ruled. The *reth* did not tour much, but had the people sent to him at Fashoda. If a killing occurred, the offending lineage would have to produce a girl and a boy. The girl would be handed to the brother (or near relative) of the dead man and the boy would go to be slave to the *reth*. If the case was not settled, or if one village went to fight with another one without sufficient cause, the *reth* would send his army (*tich*) to take all the cattle from the offending village, or, if necessary burn their villages. This army would consist of one or more of the adjacent villages, its strength depending on the amount of potential resistance. Any number of sections could be raised and it seems that the sections so instructed were glad to go, since the *reth*'s army was seldom, if ever, opposed and consequently there was little bloodshed, but a certain amount of booty.[3]

Pumphrey's opinions may seem somewhat contradictory, but it is clear that he thinks there was no highly efficient State system with an all-powerful *reth* at the head.

Evans-Pritchard points out that:

it is unlikely that the so-called 'provinces' were in fact more than districts or that they were in any sense administrative departments before they were made into something of the kind by foreign governments. Moreover, though doubtless the king exercised considerable influence in the country and may have confirmed settlement chiefs in office, he did *not*

[1] Pumphrey, op. cit., p. 19.
[2] *lau*, robe of office given by the *reth*.
[3] Pumphrey: Unpublished records. Undated: circa 1936.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

tinual guerrilla warfare, and some of them were anxious to have the trouble finally settled.' He adds, 'Each side was afraid to make the decision lest it appear weak'.

Oyler's account gives us a clearer picture of the ritual performed by the *reth* and also of his function in exhorting the people to make peace. There is nowhere any suggestion that he compels them to do so, he merely 'advises'. Much of this 'advice' is tainted with statements which reflect the *reth*'s official capacity as Government agent. 'The king made a talk in which he pointed out that the colour of the animal to be killed had bits of both red and black. The red was for the blood that would be shed, should someone break the covenant, and the black was for the evil of such a course. . . . "We, the black people unite with the red (white) people of the Government to reconcile you".' Though much of the metaphorical aspects of this speech may have derived from the Rev. D. S. Oyler himself, it is not, as a matter of fact, untypical of Shilluk speeches of this sort.[1] Later we hear that 'he (the *reth*) informed the people that the animal was a cow of Nyikang, descendant of a cow owned by Nyikang. The king added most seriously: "The flesh of this animal is my flesh, and its blood is the same as my blood. Great disaster will come on you, if you break the covenant, for you will be cursed by the blood."' Then, after considerable delay because no one was willing to take the responsibility of being first to spear the animal, men of both factions speared it to death and, as described also by Titherington, were pelted with the stomach contents.

One thing is striking. The orderly procedure described in these accounts bears little resemblance to the punitive expeditions carried out by the *reth* in order to suppress internal hostilities, and though this might be expected after thirty years of administration, it seems to me that the *reth*'s role as arbitrator is far more in accordance with his true functions in Shilluk society.

There are also references in District records to these punitive expeditions, but always without the evidence of actual instances. One hears of the 'custom of the *reth* of punishing a murderous or disobedient village by looting and destroying it. This he did either by sending a force of his own, if it was near Fashoda, or else, if it was a long way off, by sending orders to the Chief of the neighbouring village or section to do this. Such a force was apparently not resisted and there was no difficulty in finding it because there was sure to be a community with a feud against the guilty and also the *reth* only kept part of the loot. . . . This system seems to have survived the *Turkia* and *Mahdia*, possibly because there was *nothing incompatible in it with methods of those days*.'[2]

The author of this account might have added that much in the methods employed may even have derived from Turkish example. The Turks were at pains to use the *reth* as an administrative agent and doubtless encouraged such raids carried out in the name of justice and security. The author continues: 'However, these methods came to an abrupt end with the removal of *reth* Kur in 1903, the appointment by the Government of his aged successor *reth* Fadiet, and the rules laid down at the time.'

From scattered references of this nature we are not able to reach reliable conclusions concerning the *reth*'s executive authority in the past in connexion with homicide and blood-feuds, whether actual or theoretical. There is certainly a strong tradition

[1] Cf. speeches made at the installation of *reth* Asti wad Kur. Howell & Thomson, op. cit., p. 71.

[2] 'A note on Customary Law', dated June 1937 (unpublished). The italics are mine.

9:Howell E-5 (1937-1950) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

among the Shilluk that he was empowered to suppress internal feuds, that he actually did so with the assistance of an army of neutrals, and that, though the punishments inflicted on the guilty sections of the community were severe and included seizure of property and the enslavement of the guilty parties, little resistance was shown. At the same time, there are few examples cited in Shilluk tradition which date back to days earlier than the first alien administration. Such methods resemble the methods employed by those who were used as agents in Turkish times to maintain some kind of order. They are also reminiscent of Arab procedures, and it must be remembered that the Shilluk were influenced by Arab contacts.[1] They are in keeping also with the methods employed during the *Mahdia*.

On the other hand, it is quite clear that the *reth* has always had recognised functions as an arbitrator in blood-feuds. These functions are both purely secular, in the attempt to reconcile warring factions, and ritual, in the removal of prohibitions raised in feuds.[2] It is more than probable that in early days the *reth* would take no action unless he was certain that the two parties wished for peace. In Titherington's account we hear that, 'The *reth* walked among them and briefly addressed them and they answered that they wanted peace. . . . The taboo on the families at feud eating together, is removed by the *reth*.'[3]

Hofmayr says: 'When the number of the dead and wounded on both sides is equal, they stop fighting. The King will hold court and punish the offender who is in the wrong.' The idea that feuds cease when the participants are tired of fighting and of a perpetual state of insecurity is stressed again and again in reports. It is at this point that the *reth*'s intervention is accepted, and it seems to me doubtful whether he would normally intervene in any other circumstances.

Indemnity for Homicide

The present recognised indemnity for wilful homicide among the Shilluk is ten head of cattle. There have been frequent attempts by the Administration during the course of the last thirty years to raise this number, as a deterrent, but these attempts do not appear to have been either effective or generally accepted by the tribe. The traditional number demanded is also in doubt. Thomson, in an unpublished report, says: 'In the past blood-money for a killing was ten head of cattle to the deceased's family and ten to the *reth*. Later it became ten to the deceased's family, five to the *reth* and five to the Government. It is now (since 1931) ten head of cattle to the family of the deceased only.' I have sometimes heard it said that in *reth* Fadiet's time (1903–17) it was only seven head,[4] but it was raised to twenty, of which the *reth* took half, by orders of *reth* Fafiti when he first succeeded to the throne. It is also said that in the old days a girl was sometimes handed over instead of cattle, and although intermarriage between people at feud is considered wrong unless the full peace ceremonies have been completed, this girl was taken in marriage by one of the kinsmen of the dead man. If, by reason of some kinship relationship with the deceased, she fell within the prohibited degrees of marriage, she would be accepted as a

[1] Cf. The Beggara *Khamr* : *Ashá*, whereby neutral tribal segments would band together to punish wrongdoers, seizing their possessions, which were handed over to the deceased's family.

[2] Such as the prohibition on eating together and on intermarriage.

[3] Titherington, unpublished records.

[4] Sometimes quoted as being current in *reth* Kur's time (deposed 1903) too.

13: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

when he is asked to kill a man he may take a sheep, and cleave its head with an axe, and he declares that in the same manner his power has broken the head of the man against whom the charm was worked. They try to impress the people with a sense of the mysterious, and very frequently they have strings stretched in their houses to impress the people who seek their services.

The witch doctors exert a powerful influence over the Shilluks. Their influence is always against innovation, and they seek to hold the old order of things. While a medicine man who is just beginning his practice must be successful to gain the confidence of the people, yet when he once has their confidence he can readily explain away all his failures.

Very few Shilluks will admit that they believe in the power of the medicine man, but in spite of their denials they seek him constantly, and their whole manner of life is influenced by the witch doctor. A few are beginning to question the whole system. Once a gourd of God broke when some warriors were being tested before a fight. The grain that had been in it was spilled on the ground. One man pointed to the grain, and said: "Is that God"? Apparently he was the only one of the party, who connected the noise made by the gourd with the grain that was in the gourd.

So long as the Shilluks are dominated by the medicine men, they will make very slight advancement in their mode of thought and their manner of living.

15: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1926 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

821 whow
[782] the storm is very severe an offering must also be made. A hoe must be placed in front of the door. If no hoe is in the house then a fish spear, or something else made from iron, may be used instead. When a hoe or spear is thus offered it is taken back to the ordinary uses after the storm. In case they can find nothing of iron to offer, one of the inmates of the house takes a handful of dura and kneels in front of the door. He then turns back the door mat, and, reaching out, he casts the grain upward into the air.

342 Sometimes the lightning strikes (mal agɔc, heaven hits). In
821 former times when a house was struck by lightning each house in the circle had a rope tied around the apex of the cone-shaped roof. A bit of skin from the sacrificed sheep was supposed to be tied to each house. Then the houses were all connected by ropes running to these ropes. I have seen this arrangement only once. To the rope at the apex of the house old bones and snail shells are often tied. They are afraid to move the walls of the house that has been struck, and so the walls are pushed
[766] inward. If someone has been killed in the house the walls form a sort of earth covering, as he is not buried as other men. The custom in regard to electrical disturbances are changing. Many of the rites now
[177] practised are borrowed for the Dinkas, but seem to be well established at the present time.

342 According to the present usage, when a house is struck, the owner
782 usually calls a servant of Deń (Bäń Deń). After the servant of Deń arrives he surveys the place and then exclaims, "Deń says bring an ox."
821 If the people are poor he may demand a sheep only. He usually adds, "I do not ask for this offering, but Deń asks for it." The offering is then brought, it is killed, cooked and eaten in the same place. After the meat has been eaten the bones are carefully collected, and a large branch from a higlig tree is stuck up on the site of the house. Then the bones of the sacrifice, with its horns and tail, are hung on this branch. Each guest partaking of the feast is supposed to offer an iron bracelet, and these bracelets are also hung on the higlig branch.

792 A person who has had a narrow escape from death by lightning
821 may become a servant of Deń (Bäń Deń), if he so desires. When they travel they say, "Deń asks for this," and few people will refuse them when they beg in that way. In one case a person who dreamed he had been struck by lightning became a servant of Deń.

15: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1926 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

342 782 821 the liver, stomach, heart, tongue, upper lip, lower lip, and lungs. The walls of the house are then pushed down, and these bits are cast on the mound. They are to be thrown by a servant of Deñ. The soup in which the meat was cooked is taken by the chief servant of Deñ present, and the next in rank takes a gourd of beer, and they pour these upon the mound at the same time that the meat is thrown on it. The people then dance, while they sing a song of Deñ. While the servants of Deñ put the higlig branch (ŋk Deñ) in place, the rest of the people run to the river to take a bath.

751 821 At the close of the rainy season the family of the person who has been struck by lightning invite the people of the village to drink beer. One gourd full of the beer is thrown into the air for Deñ. This observance often becomes an annual event in the family. They think it helps to keep the lightning away.

342 821 778 A house is never built on the exact location of a house that has been struck by lightning, though another may be built near the place. An object that has been struck by lightning is sometimes worshipped. Sacrifices may be killed and eaten in front of it.

●177 Many of these ceremonies are borrowed from the Dinkas. Deñ is worshipped by the Dinkas; they are "Deñ's people." He is the spirit of the rain, or the rain.

132 The rains at the beginning and close of the rainy season are very often accompanied by considerable electrical displays. It is small wonder that the natives behold in amazed terror the wonderful power of nature, and it is still less cause to marvel that they try to placate the powers of the storm. The westerner, with his scientific knowledge of electricity, is often awed by the gleam of the lightning and the crash of thunder, and it is not surprising that the uneducated native is even more awed by it.

Rites connected with the Dance Initiation.

882 The Shilluk lad looks forward with eagerness to the time when he will be permitted to join in the dances of his people. Not only does he long for the time because of the social pleasure, as dancing is the chief amusement of the people, but the right to dance carries with it other privileges.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

being crimes against the community, was that in cases of homicide the murderer (or his brother if the murderer was uncaptured) was compelled to become a *Bang Reth*.

Relations between a *Reth* and his retainers were friendly, nor does the treatment of those who were enslaved as a punishment appear to have differed from that of those voluntarily enlisted. The custom was for the retainers of each *Reth* to make a village for themselves near Fashoda. There they would live until the *Reth* died. The *Reth's* body would then be taken to this village and sealed up in a house where it would remain until entirely decomposed. Only then would the bones be removed by his retainers and buried in his original village. Some of the dead *Reth's* retainers would then move to the village where he was buried and their descendants would there remain with the perpetual obligation of tending his shrine. Others would remain at their village near Fashoda and would have no further obligations to the memory of their dead patron except that they and their descendants would for ever be known as "*Bang Reth Kwalkher*" or "*Bang Reth Nyakwac*" or as the case might be.

The retainers of a particular *Reth*, having severed connexion with their own clan, became a fictitious clan in themselves. As such they cannot intermarry, though there may be no relationship of blood. Nor could a *Reth* marry a daughter or sister of one of his retainers. A *Reth* would address the daughter of a retainer as *kwara* (my granddaughter) which well indicates the relationship subsisting between them.

Under the present regime, partly because the Government has frowned upon the practice and partly because the *Reths* are now deprived of their previous source of wealth, the *Reth* has none of these traditional retainers. To-day the *Bang Reth* comprise the descendants of retainers of previous *Reths*. In some cases they have removed themselves to a new locality but in any case they remain for ever *Bang Reth* "A" or *Bang Reth* "B" (in accordance with the name of the *Reth* their ancestors served) and never rejoin their original clan.

When a *Nyimth* was planted out the *Reth* used to send to live with him a few of his own retainers who became *Bang Nyimth* and

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

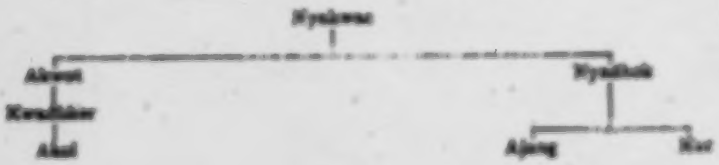
ary between them was a khor called Arepajur, just south of Fashoda. The chief of Debalo Kwom, just to the south of Arepajur, was by virtue of his office the chief of Luak and the chief of the settlement of Golbaß, some five miles north of Arepajur, was by virtue of his office chief of Ger. These two chiefs, with the chiefs of Muomo settlement in the extreme north and Tonga settlement in the south, were the four high chiefs of the Shilluk Kingdom.

This symmetrical arrangement with Fashoda as its focal point may be described as the indigenous system of the Shilluk government. Minor disputes were settled by the settlement chiefs but in major matters government was highly centralised. The high chiefs functioned as the *Reth's* representatives. It seems that they were administrative rather than judicial functionaries and were responsible for sending to Fashoda for the *Reth's* despatch any matter of more than local importance.

The Old Order Changing.

The deposition of *Reth* Kwadhker by the Turkish Government in favour of the puppet Ajang Nyidhok and later the attempt by Akul Kwadhker, during the Mahdia, to usurp the Rethship during the absence in Omdurmán of *Reth* Kur Nyidhok led to civil wars in which the settlements lying to the north of Both espoused successively the causes of Ajang and Kur (both sons of Nyidhok)[97]. As a result the settlements from Both northwards to Kwom, which had previously been a part of Luak, refused to continue so and the boundary between the two provinces thereafter was made to the south of the settlement of Both.

97. A simplified branch of the *Kwar Reth* "tree" may help help to clarify these dynastic struggles:



17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

This change was the less drastic because by that time the division into Lusk and Ger had already lost most of its practical significance. There was then already existing a tendency away from the old and highly centralised regime to one in which power was exercised locally by chiefs of confederacies, a tendency which began when the Turkish Government attempted, after deposing *Reth* Ajang, to govern the tribe without a *Reth* and through locally appointed chiefs and which has since developed as a concomitant of the inevitable disappearance of the *Reth's* arbitary powers. The change of the Lusk-Ger boundary had the effect of turning the Chief of Debalo Kwom, who had hitherto been "Chief of Lusk," into the chief of the southernmost confederacy of Ger (*i.e.* of the present "Fashoda Division"). He continued nevertheless as the titular Chief of Lusk by virtue of being Chief of Debalo Kwom. Recently the chieftainship of Fashoda Division was removed from Debalo Kwom and assumed by the Chief of Lul. An interesting question now is whether the Chief of Fashoda Division or the now subordinate chief of Debalo Kwom is titular Chief of Lusk. That this is uncertain is an indication of the emptiness of the title for all practical purposes. It may not be until the *Reth* dies that an answer can be given. Probably the ceremonial functions which appertained to the "Chief of Lusk" will be performed by whoever is the chief of Debalo Kwom.

THE GROUPING OF SETTLEMENTS INTO CONFEDERACIES.

As has been said, the growth of territorial units larger than the settlement began with the Turkish experiment following the deposition of *Reth* Ajang. Use was doubtless then made, as has been made since, of the natural tendency of contiguous settlements to agglomerate, by reason of a common cause or of the existence of outstanding personality, into loose and impermanent confederacies, described by the term *lusk*.[18] These confederacies have ever since been bolstered up to form the administrative units now called Divisions.

18. This word *Lusk* has three meanings:
(1) a building for housing cattle.
(2) The southern province of the kingdom.
(3) An agglomeration of settlements.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Thus of the present thirteen division chiefs only four hold traditional offices the others being government appointees over units based upon these rather vague confederacies. Though the four high chiefs do still possess an enhanced prestige their position is approximating rapidly to that of their less hallowed colleagues. This evolution to a more local form of government is a natural consequence of the inevitable lessening of the old autocratic power of the Rethship.

The impermanence of these confederacies is shown by a comparison between their composition in the Mahdia and their composition to-day (shown in Appendix IV), as also by the recent removal of the settlements of Mal and Abiangyei from Atodwoi Division to that of Detwok.

THE RETHSHIP.

The power of the *Reths* before Turkish interference was undoubtedly great. It was based partly on the semi-divinity with which tribal tradition clothes them and partly upon their great wealth in cattle and slaves. Justice was probably rough and large scale fighting more prevalent than litigation, such law suits as there were being seen, as previously mentioned, either by the settlement chief or by the *Reth* at Fashoda[19].

As well as wielding temporal power the *Reth* has always been the high priest of the tribal religion. Nyikang is mediator between God (*Juok*) and man, and each *Reth* is held to be a reincarnation of Nyikang. As high priest he has various obligations such as providing cattle for the sacred herds at Nyilual and Wau and providing a canoe for use at the shrine of Nyibodho (one of the Shilluk holy places).

Since the entry of the present Government the *Reth* has lost the means of acquiring wealth in cattle and is no longer allowed to have retainers of the traditional sort. He receives a substantial salary but this cannot purchase many cattle and his present comparative poverty has caused an inevitable decline in his temporal and spiritual prestige. The Rethship is living on its not inexhaustible store of divinity and the wonder is that the store has lasted so well.

19. The *Reth* is said to have had the enviable privilege of killing a tiresome litigant with a club.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

The *Reth* to-day is a convenient potentate the basis of whose power becomes more and more of an anachronism. In addition to being President of the "Central Shilluk Court," and as such hearing appeals from the twelve Division Courts, he is the mouthpiece of the Government in an ever increasing number of administrative functions and is invaluable in making peace in blood feuds and in dealing with all serious breaches of the peace. The tribe pays him elaborate outward respect, and continues to feel a genuine reverence for his office.

THE DIVISION CHIEFS.

It has already been explained that nine of the thirteen division chiefs are in a sense upstarts, being settlement chiefs exalted to an eminence which tradition does not justify, but that they are becoming progressively all to be regarded as having equal authority. They are appointed by the *Reth*, usually on the nomination of a council of the Settlement Chiefs concerned. The prospect of a monthly salary of £E. 2 and the anxiety of each settlement to provide the Division Chief makes the appointment a matter of considerable interest and rivalry. The Government's policy is generally to allow the chieftainship to remain with the lineage of the previous holder unless he was dismissed for misconduct and it is wished to penalise him and his line, or unless there are no suitable candidates from the holder's lineage, or unless his lineage has become so weak as to render impotent any chief appointed therefrom. On such occasions the chieftainship may change from settlement to settlement, as occurred recently in Fashoda Division. There is an unfortunate feeling implanted in the Shilluk that so long as a senior member of the family is alive it is improper that a junior member be appointed. A potentially able young chief will thus be rejected on the grounds of the existence of a doddering uncle. Nevertheless the Shilluk are basically aware of the desirability of a strong chief and a veto by the Government, expressed beforehand, upon any candidate who is too old will probably be excepted as a wise dispensation from above, relieving them of the odium of passing over an elder member of the family.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

The present status and functions of the thirteen Division Chiefs are the same. Each one presides over the court of his Division, and is responsible for the due payment of taxes and for sundry administrative affairs such as the clearing of roads. They have become an essential link in the administration and the feeling of "division-consciousness" is growing and needs to be fostered. The future effectiveness of the *Reth* depends much upon the strengthening of their position as his local representatives.

177 634 648

THE SETTLEMENT CHIEF.

The Settlement Chief is traditionally directly responsible to the *Reth*, since the four intervening high chiefs used to act more as his High Sheriffs than as local potentates. In addition to the execution of the *Reth's* orders the Settlement Chief has always had certain semi-religious obligations such as the building of a house or two houses at Fashoda or the maintaining of the local shrine of Nyikang. The settling of disputes within the settlement has always been his duty and the modern tendency for him to be judicially short-circuited in favour of the Division Chief should be avoided as much as possible. He can and should relieve the Division Chief of much of his work. He should attend meetings of the court at least whenever any party to a case is from his settlement. He is responsible primarily to the Division Chief for public security, taxes and road work.

622 [631] [692 197] [177] [631]

The settlement chief is selected by the lineage heads of the settlement and invested by the *Reth* who himself knots the *lau* over his shoulder. Those of Tonga alone are invested by the Division Chief.

THE VILLAGE HEADMAN.

The status of the village headman (*jal dwong pac*) varies in accordance with whether he is the headman of the principal village of a lineage (*Pan dwong*), in which case he is not only a village headman but also the representative of his lineage within the settlement, or the headman of a subsidiary village in which case he is a village headman pure and simple, the senior member of a group of homesteads. Headmen of principal villages often receive a *lau*, in some cases from a *Reth* direct

[613]

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Recently, owing to the cultivation of cotton and to the increase in demand for work at Malakal and elsewhere, the value of money has come to be more appreciated. Most of the money so acquired is stored up for the purchase of a bull, very little being spent in shops. The purchaser of a bull not unreasonably objects to its going into the maw of the *gol* herd and accordingly deposits it for safe keeping with a distant friend. This innovation, which is no less than the introduction of a system of private ownership of cattle, is calculated to work eventually a deep change in customary law. The growth of cash-mindness has already resulted in cash being sometimes substituted for a bull in cases of payments in compensation for sexual wrongs. No case is known where cash has been accepted instead of one or more of the bride wealth cattle, but this would be logically the next step. The effect of a change to cash bride wealth would be large. The present system makes for tribal cohesion and for the administratively convenient system of vicarious responsibility, whereas cash marriage payments would loosen remaining cohesion of the *gol* and render each man responsible for himself. Cattle would cease to become a medium of exchange in marriage contracts and become a commodity. The innumerable goats would cease to eat up the cotton and the products of the Mission gardens and instead themselves be eaten, much to the benefit of the Shilluk physique according to medical opinion. The economic absurdity of the Malakal Hospital contractor being sometimes compelled to import tinned milk by air so as not to forfeit his deposit would be avoided. The possibility of such economic advantages is to be set against the consequent lessening of tribal cohesion.

Succession.

There are no definite rules for the inheritance of chattels. Distribution usually takes place before death. If not they will generally be taken by the eldest son, or, in default of sons, by the next-of-kin to the deceased. The inheritance of chattels rarely produces litigation.

Cattle are taken by the succeeding *gol* leader, who may be a married son or a married brother according to circumstances. In any case the new *gol* leader holds the cattle inherited under the same trust as

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

awarded the return of his cattle in full together with the custody of the children. The only cases where divorce may be said to result from an act of the parties is where the cattle have not yet fully been paid and the wife is in consequence still in her own village. In this case if the wife's *gol* despair of the full bride wealth ever being paid they may call off the marriage and marry her to another. In this case the first husband must be repaid the equivalent of the cattle paid by him and this repayment should be made a first charge on the new bride wealth. Deductions will be made here also for children born, for even in such cases the children will go to the husband, provided always that the proffered sheep has been accepted.

If the wife had produced sufficient children to wipe off the whole bride wealth the husband will be entitled to receive nothing upon termination of the marriage, except that as has been said if the marriage has been broken through the wife's bad behaviour the husband may be awarded the return of at least a part.

Until about 1910 upon a breach of marriage the wife's *gol* had to return not only all the identical cattle paid which were still living but also all their living offspring, quite irrespective of their having passed lawfully into the possession of others. Thus divorce produced a string of litigation horrible to imagine. This state of affairs still persists with some of the Dinka of Equatoria Province. It may have the social merit of making divorce even more unpleasant in its consequences for all concerned, but it possesses also many obvious disadvantages which led to the change made by the Resident of the Shilluk in about 1910. Thereafter equivalent cattle were to suffice and offspring born after payment were not reclaimable. This change has been accepted by the Shilluk though there are still cases where reactionary chiefs go by the old rules. The change had the effect of rendering cattle negotiable instruments.

Compensatory Payments in Sexual Offences.

The generic word for cattle payments in respect of sexual offences is *kwor*. *Kwor* is payable to the *gol* of the woman concerned if she is unmarried or still living with her own *gol* and to the husband if she is

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

APPENDIX IV.

TABLE SHOWING ARRANGEMENT OF SETTLEMENTS INTO CONFEDERACIES AT THE TIME OF THE MAHDIA AND THEIR PRESENT GROUPING INTO DIVISIONS.

Divisions (1940)	Settlements	Assessed number of adult males. (in 1936)	Arrangement of Confederacies in the time of the Mahdia.
Mesmo	Thworakit	117	Mesmo
	Manam	90	
	Mesmo	243	
	Agwero	99	
	Thor	100	
	Abuor	64	
	Akurwa	94	
Dolal	Nun	130	Dolal
	Arumboth	88	
	Dolal Ajak	138	
	Nyirufo	88	
	Aruoth	57	
Atodosi	Thero	197	Athodosi
	Dimoth	66	
	Athodosi	310	
	Nyilec	144	Abiangyai
	Fanyikang	50	
	Ogod	101	
Detwok	Abiangyai	174	Otiogo
	Mal	81	
	Burbuk	52	
	Faldu	161	
	Otiogo	77	
	Detwok	140	
	Abel	97	
	Kwocang	73	
	Acago	77	
	Atero	61	
Golbak	Golo	377	Golbak
	Kodok	350	
	Lemo	143	
	Fadiang	184	
	Golbak	906	
	Nyigir	466	

OLD BOUNDARY BETWEEN GUR AND LEAR.

Fashoda	Wadman	170	Kwom
	Agwero	118	
	Kwom	191	
	Lul	930	
	Yok	173	
	Thwolong	930	
	Bio	61	
	Fabur	86	
	Bul	113	
	Nyiagar	83	
	Both	63	

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Divisions (1940)	Settlements	Assessed number of adult males. (in 1936)	Arrangement of Confederacies in the time of the Mahdia.
New boundary between Ger and Luak.			
Ogod —	Fathaa — — —	73	Ogod
	Fadit — — —	108	
	Waa — — —	243	
	Ogod Pac — —	140	
	Ogod Buta — —	176	
	Ogod Famadh — —	118	
Malakal —	Malakal Fathoore —	189	Malakal
	Malakal Acop Puot —	106	
	Malakal Ocolo — —	61	
	Malakal Ayowangun —	78	
	Wij Malakal — —	92	
	Malakal Thooruboonyo	71	
Dettim —	Obwa — — —	357	Awarajuok
	Awarajuok — —	269	
	Athokong — —	139	
	Adodo — — —	141	Dettim
	Dur — — —	231	
	Thoore Dettim — —	196	
	Owaci — — —	213	Fanyidwai
	Obai Abujop — —	161	
	Obai Dego — —	101	
	Fakang — — —	214	Fakang
Fanyidwai —	Falo — — —	216	Fanyidwai
	Fathoore — — —	95	
	Adhidhiang — —	117	
	Fanyidwai Pac — —	107	
	Faju — — —	267	
	Abujop — — —	110	
	Odwar — — —	63	
Nyijuk —	Nyijok — — —	226	non existent
	Nyanacan — —	73	
	Nagdiar — — —	176	
Fanyikang	Agunjuok — —	43	Fanyikang
	Nyiyar — — —	138	
	Fakwar — — —	80	
	Akoaare — — —	67	
	Odoojo — — —	119	
	Nyilual — — —	94	
	Bur — — —	114	
	Wilnyang — — —	150	
	Dyal — — —	101	
	Wunbe — — —	78	
	Nyilwak — — —	279	
	Dor — — —	97	
	Odong Tugo — —	100	
Tonga —	Dit — — —	96	Nyikang
	Nyijwado — — —	114	
	Dhok Alal — —	117	
	Yom — — —	355	Tonga (Tung)
	Atigo — — —	143	
	Nyibado — — —	111	
	Ayadhajo — — —	198	
	Pafonjo — — —	104	

103
161
175
177
631

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

APPENDIX V.

The Character of the Shilluk and some of their Conventions.

177 186 The most striking Shilluk characteristic is pride of race, from which most other features of their character spring. Their intense conservatism, for example, results from a conviction that everything not Shilluk in origin is inevitably bad. Their much complained of insolence results from their belief that they are every bit as good as the foreigner and just a little better because he has that great initial handicap of not being a Shilluk. It is remarkable that so few Shilluk can understand Arabic considering that no Shilluk village is more than thirty miles from either Tonga, Malakal, Kodok or Kaka, where Arabic is spoken and that from early times their contact with the north has been incessant if not always of the happiest. The *Reth's* chief policeman, an intelligent man who acts as his agent in Malakal and is constantly in attendance at the office, can speak no Arabic.

[626]

177 153 Nor is the cause simply lack of intelligence and adaptability. When a Shilluk leaves the tribe and becomes, for example, a Medical Assistant in Malakal or Tonga he dresses in western fashion because otherwise he would be laughed at. Likewise in such circumstances his children will wear seamed garments like the children of the townspeople. But as soon as he goes back to his village, whether on leave or retirement, he at once resumes the traditional tribal dress. Those who have had an opportunity to compare their intelligence with that of the Dinka, Nuer and northern Sudanese say that they are slightly more intelligent than the Nuer or the Dinka and about equal in ability to the Northerner. Certainly the Shilluk who know the English language speak it well, and it cannot be said that they are bad linguists in face of such examples as that of a notorious *Kuanyireth* of medical connexion who speaks English, Arabic, Dinka, Nuer and Anuak with great fluency and gets along adequately in Murle. Pure conservatism and the fact that all local merchants speak Shilluk accounts for the almost non-existent progress made by the Arabic language in a century of contact.

181 Disobedience, insubordination and insolence are according to many the chief Shilluk vices. The first two, although no doubt very

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

a wish to be buried at once, as his father *reth* Yor had been buried at once after being executed by the Dervishes. 766

The grave of a *reth*, and of all *kwareth*, is a shaft dug in the ground with a cavity cut in the bottom of one side to form a vault. After the body is placed in the vault, it is shut off with stakes and the shaft filled up with earth.

Some few days before he died the *reth* was baptised a Christian. [117] It is possible that his conversion affected the cermonial connected [177] with his death; the absence of his many wives from the ceremonies, and his request to be buried at once and not in accordance with traditional custom suggest this.

The *reth* is looked upon by the Shilluk as responsible for their 643 prosperity, and his strength in their eyes causes the Shilluk, their crops and their herds, and the fish and hippopotamus in their river to increase. In times of famine or cattle plague, at once the Shilluk begin to feel that the *reth* is losing his powers. For two years prior to 1943 the [731] Shilluk crops had been very poor. In 1942-43 the crops were worse than ever, and wholesale deaths from famine were only averted by large scale grain imports by the government. After the previous famine, which lasted for three years ending in 1935, the *reth* had become seriously ill. This time he was an old man, and knowing his responsibilities to the Shilluk, and feeling his physical powers failing owing to his illness, he doubtless lost the will to live, and wanted to die. Whether he was ceremonially strangled, as is traditional for *reths* and all the *kwareth*, we do not know, and cannot find out. We incline to the view that, as his death became certain, and he and his family held no further hope of recovery, he was smothered. It would have been unseemly to have held a post-mortem, and other information is not available. It might be put in this way: it is possible that he was "assisted" to die.

After his initial election the new *reth* was soon busy thinking about 643 the wake for Fafiti Yor. Shilluk opinion seemed to think it would 766 not be held for a year after his death, and that the tribal installation

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

766 [778] homestead, including the stockade, is the form of all tombs of Shilluk *reths*, and also of the numerous shrines of Nyikang which are scattered throughout the country. Outside the tomb a temporary semi-circular screen had been erected, and against this the banners of the divisions were leant and also the spears of the deceased. At the end of the ceremonies the horns of the bulls which were sacrificed were hung upon this screen.

The preliminary day of the funeral dance was confined to Shilluk chiefs. It was said to be a "dance of swords", and only the spears of the late *reth*, about thirty in number and carried by his widows, were brought at all. Those who possessed them carried swords, most [411 727 439] of which had been captured from the Dervishes or the Turks, or bought from Arab merchants. The sword is not a Shilluk weapon, and it is probable that they were produced on this occasion to express the [177 648] anti-Dervish nature of the ceremonies, an attitude of mind which was emphasized by the Shilluk songs of hate against the Dervishes, which on this day and later were sung at frequent intervals. It is difficult to say why the funeral dance of the *reth* has associations with their struggles with the Dervishes, but it may be connected with those Shilluk *reths* who were killed in battle, hanged or died in captivity. The dances are public, and, apart from the funereal aspect of the ceremonies, the defensive unity of the tribe against outside aggression must be made apparent. The tribe is without a *reth*, who is the symbol of their unity, and such occasions call for a dramatization of their co-operation against external enemies. Those who had no swords carried millet stalks, which they plucked from the fences in the village.

At four in the afternoon, the Kwanyikir, after they had set up the drums, (Note 3), walked in procession round them in an anti-clockwise direction, while the dancers began to collect in the centre of the village. After a short interval, a white bull was speared, and the carcase was handed over to the Kwanyikir as a reward for their service. The

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 viously, but was not known to have died). The sons of Fafiti were not serious competitors as it was generally agreed that it was not their turn; there was no doubt about that. The claim of the sons of Fadiet was not so easily settled. The head of the line was invited, with an elder from the same house, to an unofficial meeting, and he agreed to forego any claim for his line at the election, though the Shilluk say that he was given a more or less firm assurance that next time an election was to take place the house of Fadiet would provide the *reth*. Responsible Shilluk opinion accepted this, although we believe that unofficially certain elements among the southern Shilluk (Fadiet's country) would like to have seen a *reth* chosen from one of Fadiet's sons. Had one of them been chosen, we think it would generally have been held to be irregular. There remained the sons of *reth* Kur, who were considered to be more eligible than the others, as their father had been *reth* before Fafiti or Fadiet, and no *reth* had yet been chosen from his children.

It is often said that a *reth* nominates his successor. Fafiti, in his life time, agreed that that was the old practice before outside influences and governments started to interfere with the Shilluk, and this may well be so, or at least be the tradition, for Fafiti was a mine of Shilluk history. However in the last 100 years or so it has not been done, and Fafiti never intended to nominate his successor. It is clear, however, that a candidate nominated by a dying *reth* is still subject to confirmation or otherwise, by what we may call the "electoral college."

What Fafiti did do was to take under his wing Anei, one of the sons of Kur, and bring him up, as he himself had been brought up by *reth* Kur. Anei was known to be favoured by Fafiti, and he was even given outward signs of recognition by him, such as silver bracelets to designate him as a favourite. At Fafiti's death Anei was not nominated, but it was well known that in fact he was Fafiti's choice. Anei later told us that Fafiti used to say that if he were lucky he would be chosen *reth*. This designation by a popular *reth* would seem to be an important factor in the choice of the new *reth*.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

643 villages by the way. One of the most noticeable features of the activities surrounding Nyikang is the principle that he and his lieutenants are given, or take, what they want from Shilluk as they pass. This [173] embassy to the north may well have its origin in a raiding party, and the two sections, whose duty it is to perform this journey, may have been obliged to render this form of military service to Nyikang. Nowadays the silver and the cloth which were originally plunder, are [177] bought from Kosti with money supplied by the *reth*, and contributed [437] by Shilluk north of Kaka. Other requirements are ostrich feathers procured from the country round Kaka for the head pieces of the images of Nyikang and Dak, by the people of Mwomo, and ivory for bracelets to be worn by various functionaries at the installation itself. This was provided from the tusks of elephants slain by the Shilluk in 1938.[12] They are very rare in Shilluk country. Bamboo is brought from Fungor in the eastern Nuba Mountains for the bodies of Nyikang's image, and those of his sons Dak and Cal. This is brought by the [283] people of Akwobai. Certain sacred ropes made from the fibre of dom palms, which grow round Fanyikang, are brought by "Dak", who with his followers makes a special pilgrimage some two months before the ceremonies.

643 An obligation lies on the chiefs of Fanyikang to produce skins 824 of the female Mrs. Gray antelope from Fanyikang Island. These are 292 required as the high robes of honour of the *reth*. They are worn by the *reth* himself and all the important people in the ceremony. To be presented with a Mrs. Gray skin is a mark of the greatest esteem. They are royal game, and are only killed in the first year of a new *reth*'s reign. On this occasion doubtless to save any complications with the government, which strictly preserves these antelopes, the operation was all over before the administration had word of it.

643 The houses of Fashoda had to be tidied up and new fences built, 356 but no new building in mud was done.

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[12] 12. In 1938 a few elephants invaded Shilluk country near Malakal, for the first time for many years.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

such is the spiritual oneness of Nyikang and all *reths* that their property is ultimately under the authority of Nyikang, and belongs to Nyikang.

20. There are two traditions about Cal. We think there must have been two sons of Nyikang called Cal. One is said to have been the second *reth* of the Shilluk, and the other is said never to have come to Shilluk country, but to have stayed behind in Uganda to become the ancestor of the Acholi. It was the latter tradition which was more in evidence in connexion with the effigy of Cal, but the former explanation might have been more reasonable.

21. It is the tradition that a man should be tied down between the opposing armies to be stepped over by the combatants. In 1903 however, at the time of the installation of *reth* Fadiet, a young man went to the Governor at Kodok, and petitioned him to forbid the *reth* to tie down his father to be stepped over. The Governor forbade this practice, for the danger of the man being trampled to death was considerable, and ordered that a bull be substituted. A bull was used at the installation of *reth* Fafiti as well, but now the petitioner of 1903 a man of the Kwa Nyidiang, whose duty it was to provide the man for tying down, asked if he might be tied down in place of the bull, for, he said, his defiance of the custom in 1903 had caused his family to sicken and die. Nyikang was consulted about this, but he said "If you wish to carry out the old custom, you must do it completely, and provide me with a girl to take back to Akurwa." The negotiations broke down, as no one would provide the girl, and a bull was substituted. But it was rather halfheartedly drawn across the battleground, and not tied down between the two armies. Seligman (*op. cit.* p. 65) suggested that the man should have been tied down at Khor Arepejur on the first day of the ceremonies. We think that he must have been wrongly informed by the Shilluk, in view of all the circumstances surrounding the hitch in this second mock battle.

The *orore* then went to fetch the body from Debwor. The remains were put in a special bag made from the hide of a cow-calf sacrificed for the occasion and wrapped in white cloth and the party set out for Kujo, travelling by night and with an advance guard who were entitled to seize small gifts and ransoms from those unfortunate enough to cross their path.[1]

On the arrival of the party at Kujo an ox was sacrificed as *akadh* (a sacrifice to allow them to enter the village) and the remains of *reth* Dak were brought into the *gol dwong*, by now transformed into his *kwogo*. The grave was then dug inside one of the two huts[2] and on the second day *keylig* wood (*Balanites aegyptica*) was cut and a new bier (*pum*) was constructed, bound with leather thongs taken from the hide of the ox sacrificed as *akadh*. On this the remains were placed, lowered into the grave and buried. Immediately afterwards the chief (*jago*) of the *orore* came out singing the song of Nyikang which is the usual signal for the start of public ceremonies and the song was taken up by those outside. On this occasion the crowd proceeded to the river to bathe themselves. Apparently the spirit of the *reth* himself had appeared to one of the *bungwok* in a dream and had demanded that this unconditional rite of purification should take place.[3] After this the duties of the *orore* were completed and the *kwa* Nyikir took over. *kwa* Nyikir come from Fadong north of Fashoda and are specifically concerned with the funeral dances of Shilluk *reths*.[4]

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[1] Fr. Hurst informs me that they travelled fast but not for long distances. They rested for the day at some village where a bull was sacrificed. Only a small party travelled with the *reth*'s remains and it was noticeable that the people kept out of the way. At every large watercourse a sheep was sacrificed, again called *akadh*. The word is derived from the verb *kadhe*, "to cross over."

[2] I was not present at Kujo until later, and had I been there, I should not have been allowed to witness the actual burial. The procedure was described to me later and I can only give the bare outline of what happened. I was informed that the grave is of the usual Shilluk pattern—a straight slit-trench with a side chamber below, in which the body is placed lying full length on the right side.

[3] I was unable to discover where this idea originated and whether it had any special significance. I suspect Christian associations since *reth* Dak had been educated for three years at the elementary school at Dobib Hill (American Presbyterian Mission) and had retained links with them.

[4] Nyikir. "Children of the Nile (Kir)." Tradition relates that these people are not Shilluk in origin but were found by Nyikang at a place called Podho Ngo ("the lion country"). Nyikang was attracted by their drumming. On Nyikang's approach they fled into the river where Nyikang captured them and made them his drummers, their specific duty being to beat the drums at the funeral wakes of all subsequent *reths*. I am indebted to Mr. J. L. Baker for this information.

533 destroyed, Yor son of Nyidhongo, the country is ruined," is one of the main
537 refrains of the song of Yor. Other songs refer to the immortality of their
76 reths. Of Dak, son of Nyikang, we hear that he only vanished, he did not die.
[715] Of Kwoikom, who was killed in battle against the Dervishes at Jebel Gadir,
[18] they sing, *Kurjang* (Kwoikom) *cie kwy abai tho nyiwang kedi tho wadi nini*, " Kurjang the fierce one, when he went out to die he did not fear, fierce one, death is only sleeping."

766 Warriors from the surrounding settlement of Fanyidwai Puc then entered
[576] in battle order, carrying their shields and spears. After a preliminary march round the arena, spears and shields were discarded and only sticks and millet stalks carried. This is usual at Shilluk public ceremonies. Dances continued for three days, men of Fanyikang, Dernim, Fakang and Malakai attended and the procedure was not different. Over two hundred and eighty oxen were slaughtered for the occasion, the tails and some of the horns being hung on the fence surrounding the tomb, while the meat was consumed by the participants.

[783] On the final day, after a great show of dancing and further sacrifices, the ceremony of purification known as *dango* (or *Yal*) took place. The *bangreth*, *nyireth* and also many other kinsmen of the late *reth* were conducted by the *ororo* into the centre of the village, where an ox was sacrificed while they sat
[777] round in the centre. According to strict Shilluk custom, this should have
30a] been followed by a general shaving of heads. In fact, they did not do so, possibly because the ritual bathing in the river was considered sufficient purification. No satisfactory explanation for this deviation from custom was forthcoming. It is worth mentioning also that the *okak mom*, latrine, and the *bilo* (or *gol pi*) bath place, of the late *reth*, which are attached to the *gol dwong* and used by him in the past, were fenced off and guarded. Anyone approaching them was seized by the *ororo* and made to pay a small forfeit.

643 The *reth*-elect, *Kur wad* Fabi, was present on the first day of the *wowo*,
766 as a gesture of respect to his predecessor, for it is not necessary for the new *reth* to be there and he never appears in public. In particular he may not see the relics of Nyikang carried by the *kwa* Nyikir, for these are associated with the death and burial of a *reth*, not with the living.

766 The *kwa* Nyikir then set out for Debwor where a similar ceremony was also to be held for the northern Shilluk. I was not myself present and am indebted to Mr. J. L. Baker for the following account.

" On November 21st, the *ororo* and *kwa* Nyikir had returned to Fashoda for the final act in the obsequies of *reth* Dak and arrived there after several days spent on the road. At about 4 p.m., as at Kojo where the actual bodily

24: Howell E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

I have assumed in the reader some knowledge of these accounts, for the observations which are recorded here are not part of a full and detailed description, but of a note intended to amplify previous records.

Although the spirit of Nyikang may appear almost anywhere in Shilluk country and in the numerous shrines which are found there, I think it is safe to assume that, where the new *reth* is concerned, Nyikang disappears at the time of the actual burial of the late *reth*. His spirit appears again in the effigy which is kept at Akurwa, the most important shrine in the country, and remains there pending the final ceremonies of the installation. Until the obsequies of his predecessor are completed, the *reth*-elect is not finally accepted, though he must follow the rules laid down by tradition and must avoid pollution. Theoretically, though this no longer holds true with the administration of the present government, his position may at any time be challenged by a rival and civil war might follow. After the old *reth* has been buried, though the danger from rivals is always present, he has to face the spirit of Nyikang and to undergo the trials to which Nyikang will subject him before he is accepted as a worthy successor and is himself possessed by the spirit. Actual physical danger from other claimants, the danger of an uprising against him, which is never entirely absent throughout his reign, is at its peak, but wanes as each stage is successfully passed. All this is expressed by the conventional attitudes displayed by him and his people and in the ordeals he must undergo. Thus, though there may be no real danger of armed conflict, the situation demands that these conventions be followed and throughout there is an atmosphere of insecurity.

We are here concerned with the election and installation of Kur *wad* Fafiti. As the son of a *reth* who ruled the Shilluk for so long and so successfully[1] and coming immediately after two *reths* whose reigns were short and by no means universally popular, Kur was a likely candidate and it was generally accepted that one of the house of Fafiti was the obvious choice. The Electoral College of chiefs sat at Fashoda immediately after the body of Dak *wad* Fadiet had been immured in the hut at Debwor. Mr. J. L. Baker, who was present, describes the procedure as follows:

"On the 13th May, 1951, the Electoral College sat without further delay as the chiefs wanted a new *reth* quickly owing to the approach of the rains. Also the issue was pretty clear from the outset as, apart from one or two chiefs in Golbainy, the Shilluk were solidly in favour of *nyireth* Kur—a man known to me as a very well-behaved and dignified type, from Bapi behind Kodok. The College on this occasion was ten strong (no Tonga people had arrived, but this was not considered important). The following sat:

1. *jago* Yorleiker (Gol Dhiang)
2. *jago* Thabo (Gol Nyikang)
3. *kwanyireth* Cayo (*jang kwareth*)[2]

[1] There were occasional conspiracies against Fafiti, notably that of Nyaweilo *wad* Kur in 1932. See Pumphrey, M. E. C., *The Shilluk Tribe*, S.N.R. Vol. 24 p. 5.

[2] *jago jang kwareth*, lit. "the chief of the chiefs of the *kwareth*." The title was apparently given to this branch of the royal house by *reth* Nyakwac.

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

or Greek merchant and purchase one imported from England.

The most important and busiest months in the Shilluk year are those of the rainy season, from June to November. When the first rains fall, the villagers go out to prepare their fields for planting. The main plantations are generally at a considerable distance from the village, sometimes as much as ten miles inland; the small patches of maize and millet around the villages, usually cultivated by the women, are for a quick crop that can be used as soon as it is ripe. After the first few showers the grass is burnt and the ashes left to be washed into the soil. When enough rain has fallen to soften the ground, planting begins. There is no preliminary back-breaking hoeing or digging; the Shilluk would regard as crazy anyone who would suggest that such a thing was necessary or would improve the land. He would say that if the rains are good and all other circumstances favourable to growth, he will get enough grain to last him for the year, whereas if fortune is adverse, all the digging in the world will not fill his store basket. What was good enough for his fathers away back to the time of Nyikang is good enough for him; why should he try to improve on the wisdom of the ancients? If this particular patch was sufficient for his father and his father's father, why should he go to the trouble of clearing another? One of the Fathers in Lul, an expert and enthusiastic farmer, tried to convert the schoolboys to a better system of farming by showing them the benefits of digging and manuring the land. He divided an area of ground into two equal parts, planting one half according to the Shilluk and the other according to his own improved method; yet even the sight of the bumper crop that he obtained failed to impress the boys: it was not the Shilluk way of doing things and therefore not for them. And so, the husbandman with a sharp pointed stick removes a small divot from the unbroken surface, drops in a few millet seeds and pushes back the soil with his heel as he moves on. When the whole field has been sown in this manner, he is content to sit back and leave the rest to the beneficence of Nyikang,

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

in an ajwogo to cure her. He diagnosed her illness, which actually was pneumonia, as an evil spirit inside her, and proceeded to release it by gouging a hole in her side with a broken and rusty scissors blade. It was due only to the care that the poor girl received from the indignant nuns that she was saved at all, and fully two months after her 'operation' she had not completely recovered the use of her limbs, and was reduced to crawling round the village on her hands and knees.

Fortunately, the people are coming to realize the good that proper medical treatment can do them. They are more willing to send to the local medical dispensary for assistance and, if necessary, to allow the Medical Assistant or us at the mission to send their sick into Malakal hospital. On this account the influence of the ajwogo as a general practitioner is being weakened and it will be greatly to the benefit of the Shilluk when it is destroyed altogether.

The other disciple of Nyikang, the jal yath, is a dabbler in black magic, a worker of evil. For a fee, he will undertake to bring about the death or the illness of an enemy, or an injury to his crops or cattle. Often enough the evil effects he does cause will be brought about by the old-fashioned method of poison, but to impress his client he will have recourse to the childish practice of making an image of the intended victim and sticking nails in it to demonstrate the pains he is to suffer, or causing it to waste away, when the sufferer's body will waste in a similar manner. The jal yath is undoubtedly greatly feared by the people and plays upon their fears to achieve his end. An instance of this occurred at Detwok some years ago. We employ a number of youths at the mission as gardeners, cowherds, kitchen and table boys, etc. One of this little community, the gardener, was the proud possessor of a wooden box in which he could keep his few possessions under lock and key. Since he was the only one thus blessed, the other boys used to entrust their savings to him, each keeping his modest sum, ranging from a few piastres to a pound or so, in a tobacco tin in the wooden box. One day it was discovered that the box had been opened

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

Father Beduschi wrote that the site of the new mission was unhealthy, and that it had no resources, unless clouds of mosquitoes and flies and armies of white ants could be called resources. As soon as the rains had ended, the new arrivals dug two wells for water, to the amazement of the natives, who could not understand the need for a well when the river was only half a mile away, and who refused to drink the water from the wells, thinking it was bewitched. Father Beduschi managed to gather a few boys together and start a school, but his work was undone by the chiefs, witch doctors, and old people who came and took the children away by force. In other ways, too, ill-luck dogged the new foundation: the few crops they had succeeded in planting in the poor soil failed; the road they had made from the mission to the river was nearly all carried away by floods; a bridge they had built was burned; a great pile of grass gathered for roofing the huts was destroyed by fire.

Father Beduschi had hoped to obtain catechists from Uganda, but when this was found impossible he borrowed some from Lul and sent them into the surrounding villages. He wrote also to the Mother General of the Verona Missionary Sisters asking her to send some Sisters to work in the mission as a present for the Silver Jubilee of his ordination and his coming to Africa. 'Detwok,' he wrote, 'is made up of thorns and crosses; I cannot promise the good Sisters anything but work and trouble; I even promise them disappointments and not consolations, but I do promise them a missionary life, and what more do they desire?' He did not live to see the Sisters arrive, for on November 10th, 1924, he died of blackwater fever, offering his life for the salvation of the Shilluk people. When he was dying, his companion, Father Brambilla, offered up to two shillings for a bottle of milk to give him, but the neighbouring villagers refused to let him have it.

Brother Joshua who was with him both at Tonga and again at the Detwok mission died eventually as a leper. In Tonga he had made friends with a leper in an effort to

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

convert him. In Detwok he acted as cook, and one day the native boy who helped him came to Father Beduschi and said that Brother must have leprosy because he picked up very hot things without feeling anything. It was true, and the Brother lived the rest of his saintly life in a leper colony, which he called his parish.

In 1925 the Sisters arrived from Lul to take possession of the huts which had been built for them. Matters progressed slowly, but the years 1931 and 1932 seemed to see an awakening of interest among the Shilluk in matters of religion. This did not last, but the missionaries found it necessary to build a new church as the original mud building was not large enough for the congregation. They taught the natives how to make bricks and cement and how to build.

During the making of the bricks for this church an accident occurred which nearly resulted in the closing of the mission. On April 1st, 1931, some youths and girls were carrying bricks out of the kiln, singing and pushing one another as they worked. Suddenly the whole pile collapsed, burying three girls and two boys. Some women who were going for water gave the alarm and soon the compound was full of frantic natives all shouting agreement with the chief who said: 'You see what happens when you allow your children to work for the foreigners.' They ran shrieking when a Father or Sister managed to extricate one of the victims, but none of them would help to carry out the dying children. The three girls died immediately and one of the boys a week later. Papiti, the king, was soon on the spot and held a conference with his chiefs, all but two of whom were clamouring for the expulsion of the missionaries. The king listened to their speeches and then rose to speak himself. 'Is not this a thing permitted by God?' he asked. 'Did the foreigners do it deliberately? If a crocodile takes one of our young men, on whom do we take revenge? Is this not an accident, too? Have not the foreigners helped us often? Who take care of our sick? Is not this permitted by God?' The chiefs rose: 'You have spoken well,' they said, 'let us go.' The mission